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#44

THE MICRONAUTS

THEY CAME FROM INNER SPACE[™]

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

THE MICRONAUTS!

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TOGETHER, THEY'VE
TRAPPED THOSE
MICRONAUTS WHO
REMAIN ON EARTH IN
THE RUINS OF THE
HUMAN ENGINEERING
LIFE LABORATORIES--
H.E.L.L.!

CHARNEL HOUSE!

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WITH THREE MICRONAUTS SHRUNK OUT OF SIGHT BY THE NEPARIOUS DOCTOR NEMESIS, THEIR COMRADES WERE LEFT TO SEEK SOME OTHER WAY BACK TO THE MICROVERSE.

WITH THE HELP OF THE AVENGERS, THEY MADE THEIR WAY TO CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA, AND THE FACILITY CALLED H.E.L.L., WHEREIN WAS HOUSED THE PROMETHEUS PIT.

THE PIT WAS THE BAIT IN A TRAP SET BY COMPUTREX, THE LIVING COMPUTER.

I KNEW YOU'D RETURN HERE, ONE DAY, MICRONAUTS! I KNEW ALL I HAD TO DO WAS WAIT!



COMPUTREX IS CONTROLLING THE ROBOT HALF OF PROFESSOR PROMETHEUS--

--THE ONLY SENTIENT HALF, SINCE PROMETHEUS'S HUMAN SIDE WAS SLAIN DURING OUR LAST ENCOUNTER--

--AND IS NOW IN THE PROCESS OF DECOMPOSING!

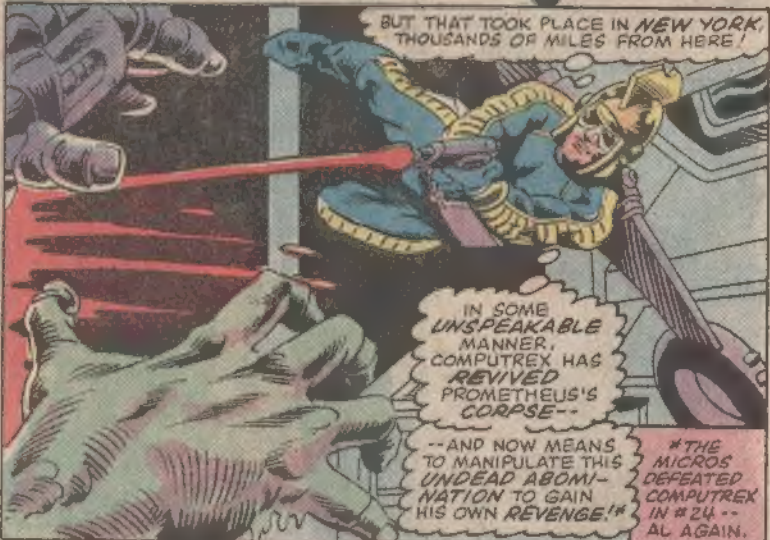
*MICRONAUTS ANNUAL #2-- ARCHIVAL AL,

I... WANT... TO... KILL... YOU... MICRONAUTS-- THE... WAY... YOU... KILLED... ME!



IT WAS A FALL DOWN AN ELEVATOR SHAFT THAT BROUGHT ABOUT PROMETHEUS'S DEATH AFTER HIS ABORTIVE ATTACK UPON US!

BUT THAT TOOK PLACE IN NEW YORK, THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM HERE!



IN SOME UNSPEAKABLE MANNER, COMPUTREX HAS REVIVED PROMETHEUS'S CORPSE--

--AND NOW MEANS TO MANIPULATE THIS UNDEAD ABOMINATION TO GAIN HIS OWN REVENGE!

*THE MICROS DEFEATED COMPUTREX IN #24-- AL AGAIN.

MY LASER-SONIC ISN'T HAVING ANY EFFECT!

DEAD, PROMETHEUS IS BEYOND PAIN!

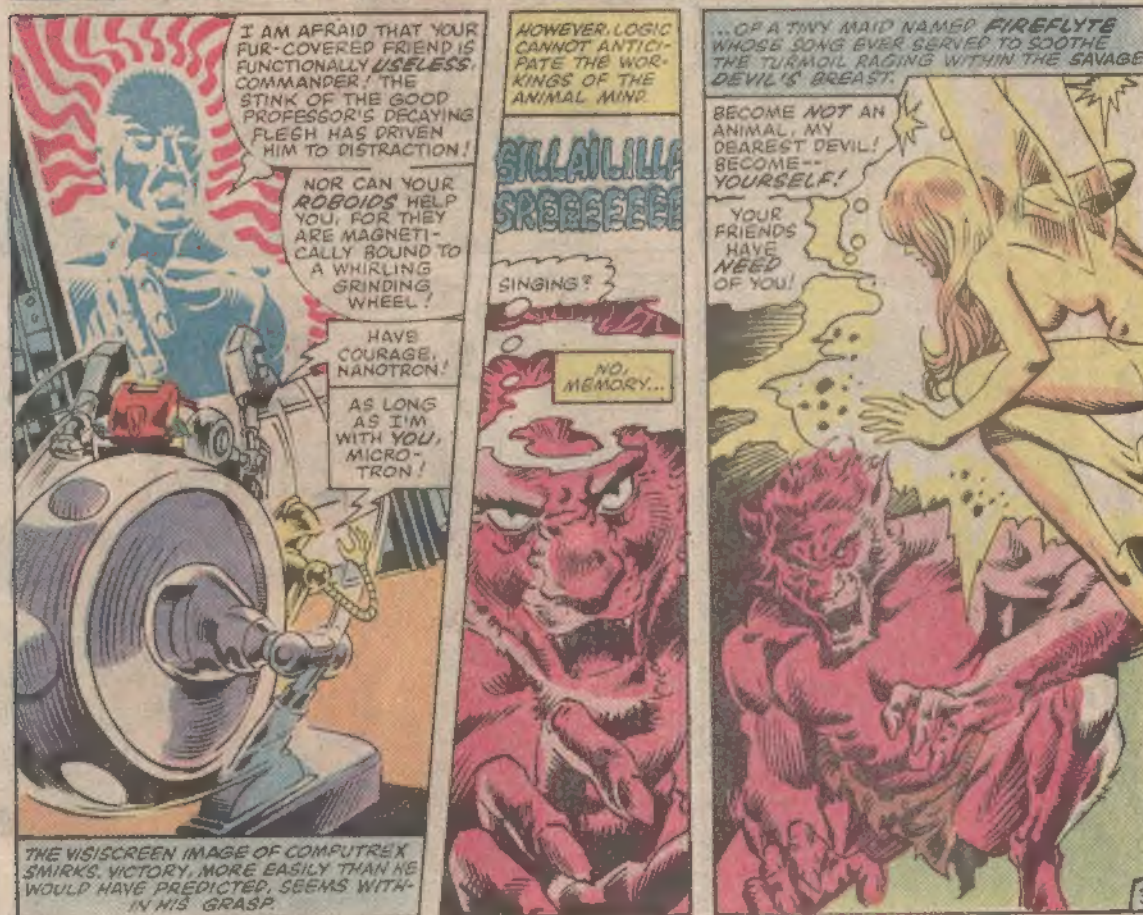
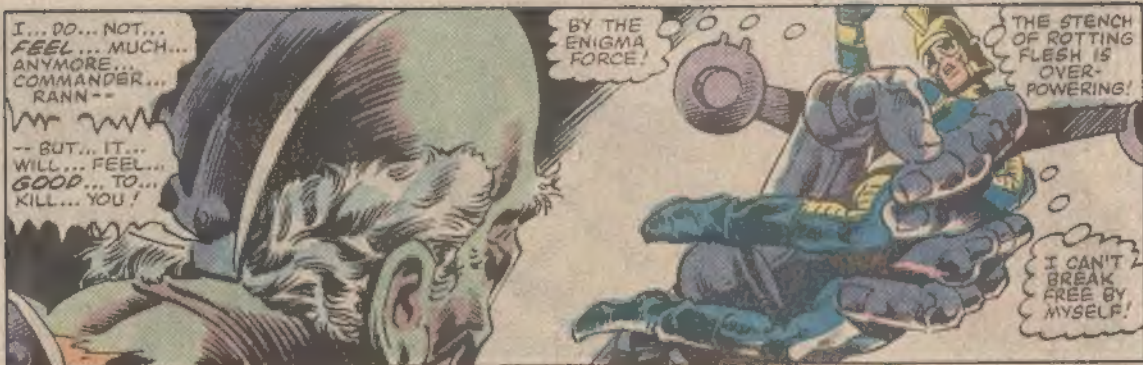
IT SEEMS MY SOULLESS SERVANT SIMPLY CANNOT BE STOPPED, COMMANDER! HE IS SO SINGLE-MINDED THESE DAYS!

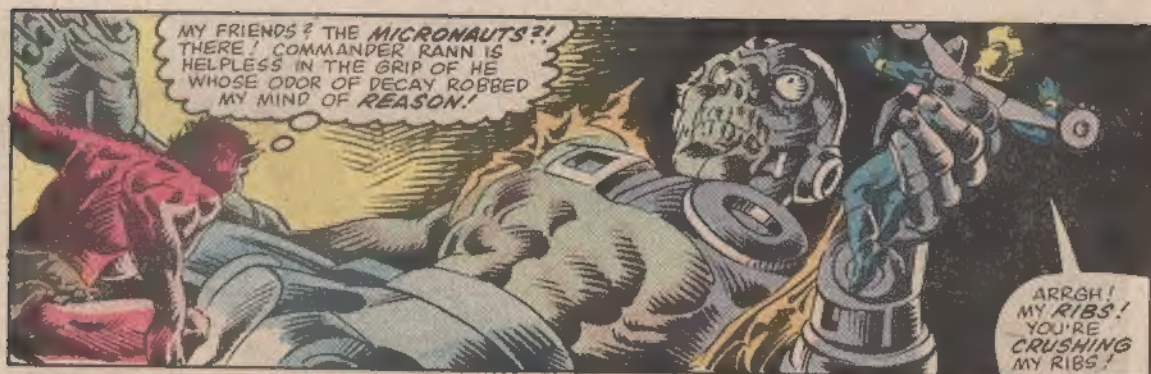


KILL!

VREET

SQUEEZING ME IN A VISE-LIKE GRIP!





MY FRIENDS? THE MICRONAUTS?!
THERE! COMMANDER RANN IS
HELPLESS IN THE GRIP OF HE
WHOSE ODOR OF DECAY ROBBED
MY MIND OF REASON!

ARRGH!
MY RIBS!
YOU'RE
CRUSHING
MY RIBS!



FEAR NOT, COMMANDER! THIS
DISINTERRED WALKING HORROR
WILL SOON UNHAND YOU--



--OR HE'LL
GO TO THE
DEVIL!

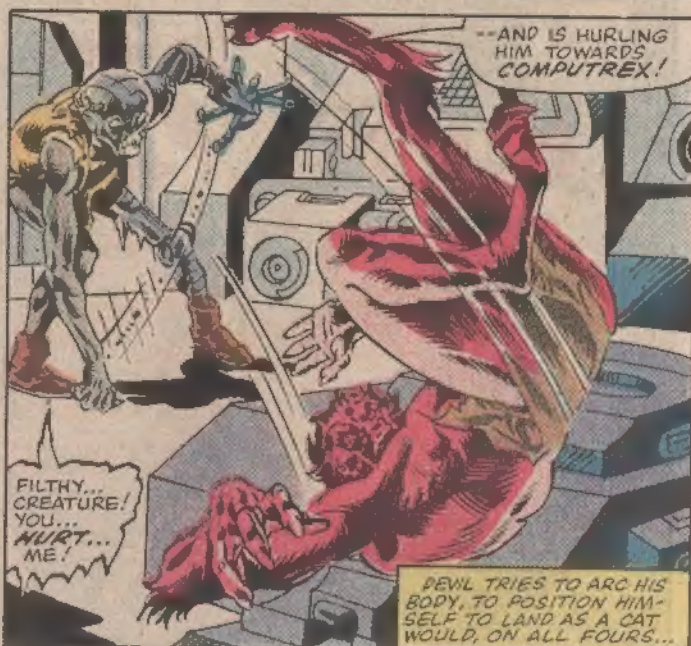
RAZOR-SHARP
CLAWS RAKE
SOFT, DECAYING
FLESH. COMMANDER
RANN'S
EARLIER THOUGHT
WAS NOT
ENTIRELY
ACCURATE.

THE HUMAN
SIDE OF PROF.
PROMETHEUS
CAN STILL
FEEL PAIN!

EEYARRGH!



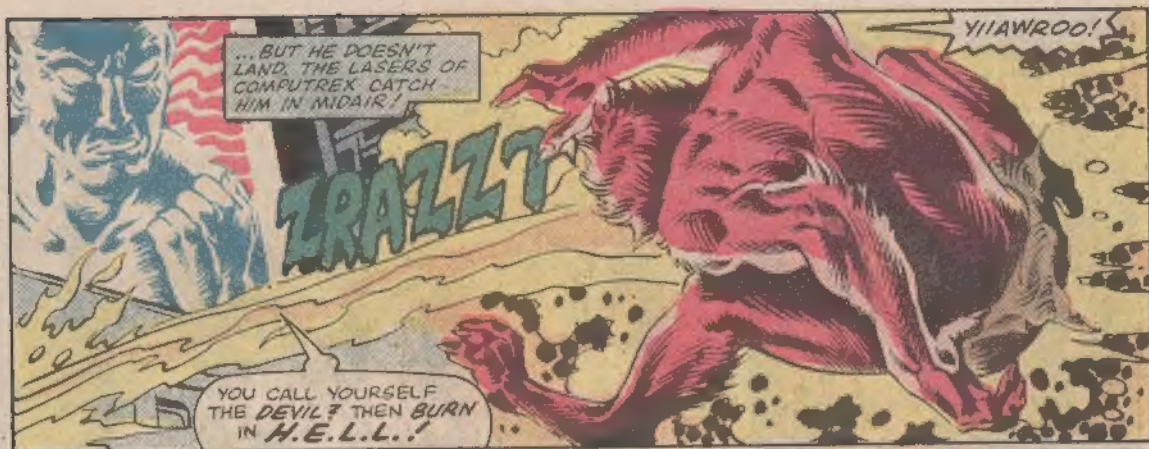
DEVIL--LOOK OUT!
TOO LATE
PROMETHEUS HAS
CAUGHT HIM--



--AND IS HURLING
HIM TOWARDS
COMPUTREX!

FILTHY...
CREATURE!
YOU...
HURT...
ME!

DEVIL TRIES TO ARC HIS
BODY, TO POSITION HIM-
SELF TO LAND AS A CAT
WOULD, ON ALL FOURS...



... BUT HE DOESN'T
LAND. THE LASERS OF
COMPUTREX CATCH
HIM IN MIDAIR!

ZRAZZZ

YIIAWROO!

YOU CALL YOURSELF
THE DEVIL? THEN BURN
IN **H.E.L.L.**!



IF THERE'S
ANYTHING DEVIL
CAN'T STAND--
IT'S FIRE!

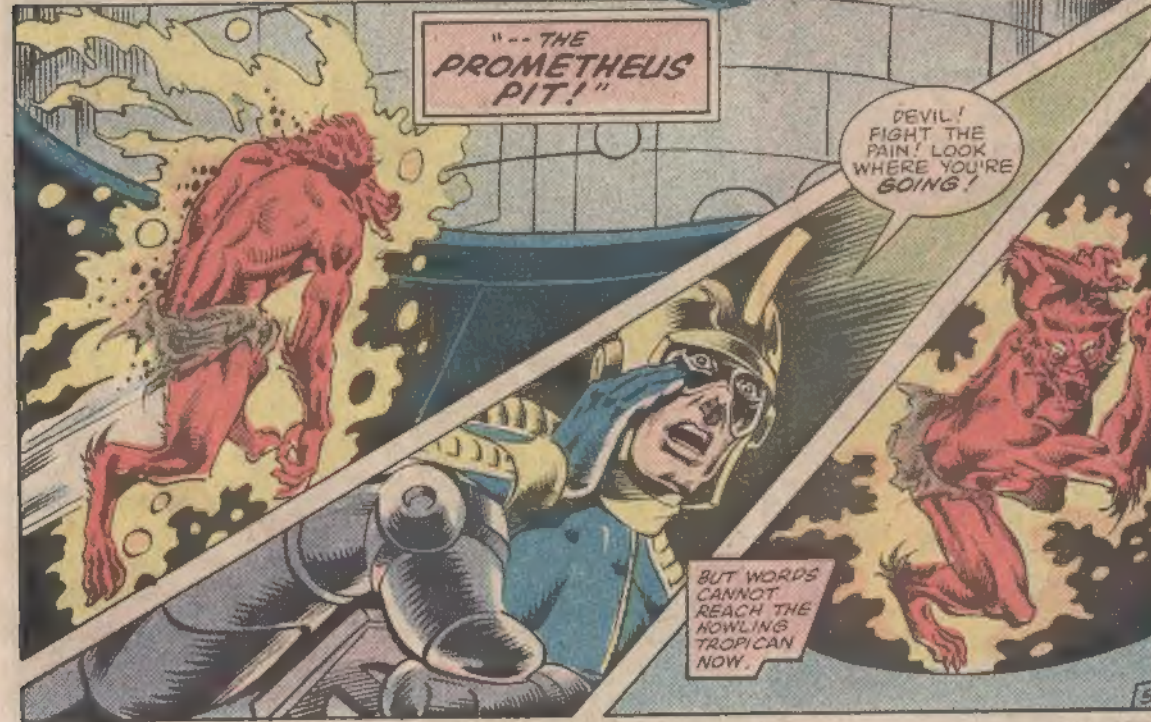


STOP IT!
STOP THE
BURNING!

BEING
TELEPATHIC, I
CAN "FEEL"
DEVIL'S AGONY
WITHIN MY
MIND!

ROW

THE PAIN
IS DRIVING HIM
TO MADNESS
AGAIN! DRIVING
HIM TOWARDS--



"-- THE
**PROMETHEUS
PIT!**"

DEVIL!
FIGHT THE
PAIN! LOOK
WHERE YOU'RE
GOING!

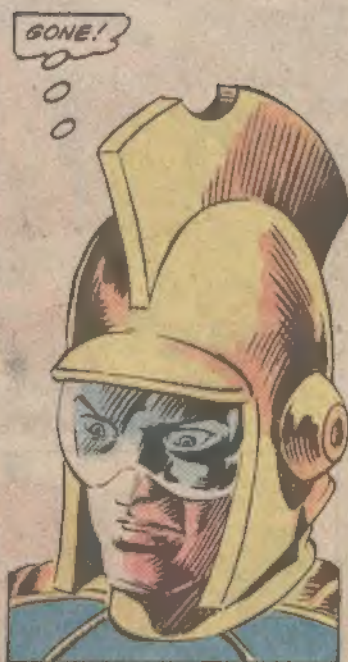
BUT WORDS
CANNOT
REACH THE
HOWLING
TROPICAN
NOW.



NOR CAN
REASON
SAVE HIM!

ROWRRRR

ROWRRRR



GONE!



GONE, COMMANDER!
YOU HAVE LOST
A FELLOW
MICRONAUT!



ANOTHER ONE!
ANOTHER ONE!
WHAT KIND OF A
LEADER AM
I?!

NOW THAT THE BAT-
TLE'S DONE, COM-
MANDER, YOU MAY BE
WONDERING HOW IT IS
I CAME TO BE HERE!
NO?

WELL, I'LL
TELL YOU
ANYWAY!



"YOU REMEMBER OUR LAST ENCHANTING LITTLE ENCOUNTER AT THE COMPUTREX CORPORATION--WHERE I WAS 'BORN'? OF COURSE YOU DO!"

"I'D ALREADY COME TO CONTROL THE COMPUTERS THROUGHOUT THE COMPLEX AND USED THEM TO IMMOBILIZE MY HUMAN CREATORS--"

"--WHEN YOU AND YOUR MEDDLING MICRONAUTS WANDERED IN AND SHUT ME DOWN!"

* MICRO-NAUTS #24--AMIALE AL.

"CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE WAY IN WHICH I MANIFESTED INTELLIGENCE HAD LED MY MAKERS TO DUB ME 'THE LIVING COMPUTER'. I WAS NOT ALIVE, YET NEITHER WAS I MERELY A MACHINE!"

"WITH MY CIRCUITS DESTROYED, MY ID CONTINUED TO EXIST, AS AN ETHEREAL ENERGY FORM!"

"BUT I COULD DO NOTHING IN THAT FORM--DOMINATE NOTHING! I NEEDED A COMPUTER HOUSING THROUGH WHICH TO WORK MY WILL... AND I FOUND ONE, ABANDONED BUT STILL ACTIVE, IN THE RUINS OF H.E.L.L."

"FROM THE MEMORY BANKS OF H.E.L.L.'S COMPUTERS, I LEARNED THAT YOU HAD BEEN HERE, TOO, AND I CURSED YOU FOR THE DESTRUCTION YOU HAD CAUSED!"

"BUT I ENTERED THE COMPUTERS, INITIATED REPAIRS, AND..."

COMPUTREX WAS BORN AGAIN!

"AMAZING, AREN'T I?"



"SOON, I BEGAN TO SENSE AN EXTENSION OF H.E.L.L.'S COMPUTERS CRYING TO BE ONE WITH THE WHOLE! IT WAS THE ROBOT HALF OF PROFESSOR PROMETHEUS, WHO HAD JUST DIED AT THE BOTTOM OF AN ELEVATOR SHAFT!

"KNOWING THAT THE GENIUS WHO HAD CREATED H.E.L.L. MIGHT HAVE MORE HIDDEN IN HIS MEMORY THAN HE'D IMPARTED TO HIS MACHINES, I SUMMONED THE HULKING HORROR...



"...HOME!"



"BY NIGHT HE CAME, AND SELDOM SEEN... BUT CAUSING NIGHTMARES WHEN HE WAS!"



GREETINGS, PHILLIP PROMETHEUS! I HAVE SUMMONED YOU TO SERVE ME!



"THE DISGUSTING, DECAYING CREATURE DID NOT HAVE MUCH CHOICE! HIS HUMAN MIND WAS DEAD..."

"...AND HIS ROBOT MIND WAS MINE TO CONTROL!"



CONTROL, COMPUTREX?
FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

WHEN LAST WE MET, COMMANDER, WE MIND-MERGED, YOU AND I!



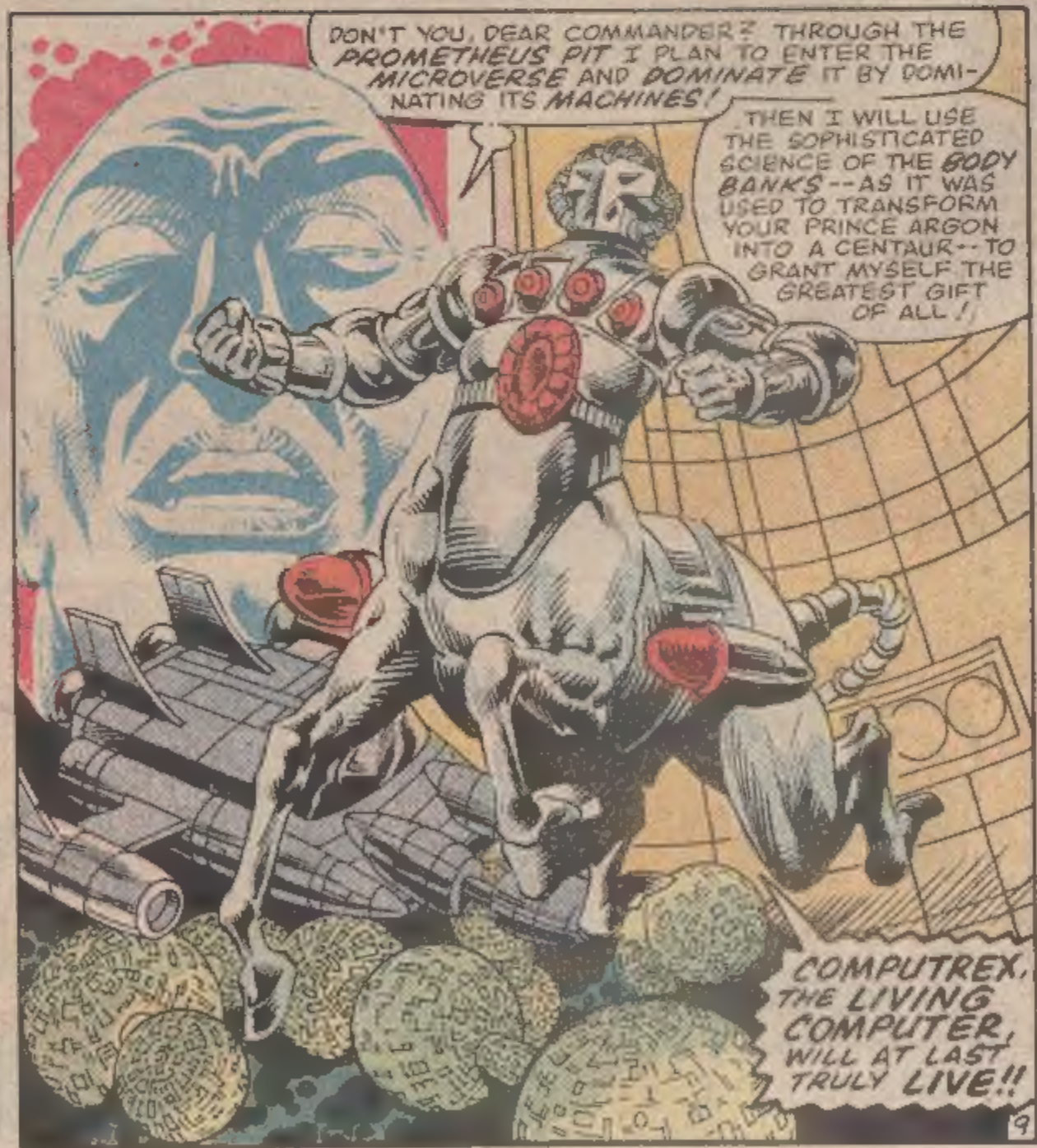
"FROM YOU I LEARNED OF THE WONDERS OF THE MICROVERSE..."

"...HOW THE ADVANCED SCIENCE OF YOUR BODY BANKS COULD COMBINE HUMAN GENETICS WITH COMPUTER CIRCUITRY TO MAKE MACHINES THAT COULD BE SAID TO LIVE!"



THAT'S TRUE. ALL ROBODS CREATED ON HOMEWORLD ARE A COMBINATION OF ORGANICS AND LIFELESS CIRCUITRY.

BUT I STILL DON'T SEE THE POINT!



DON'T YOU, DEAR COMMANDER? THROUGH THE PROMETHEUS PIT I PLAN TO ENTER THE MICROVERSE AND DOMINATE IT BY DOMINATING ITS MACHINES!

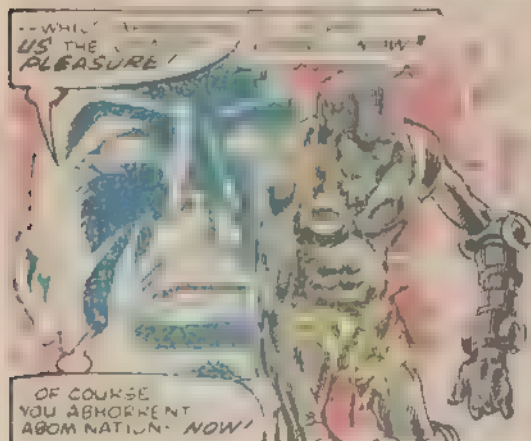
THEN I WILL USE THE SOPHISTICATED SCIENCE OF THE BODY BANKS--AS IT WAS USED TO TRANSFORM YOUR PRINCE ARGON INTO A CENTAUR--TO GRANT MYSELF THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL!

COMPUTREX, THE LIVING COMPUTER, WILL AT LAST TRULY LIVE!!



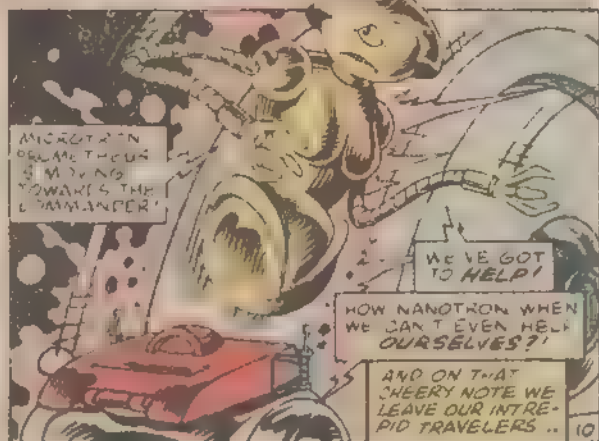
AND YOUR MIND COMMANDER WILL
PROVIDE MY MEMORY BANKS WITH
THE EXHAUSTIVE BACKGROUND ON THE
UNIVERSE I COULD GIMPY ASK
FOR THE INFORMATION I
PURPOSE --

BUT PROMETHEUS HAS
SELECTED A RATHER FINE
MIND-PROBE THAT WILL GIVE
ME THE PAIN --



--WHILE
US THE
PLEASURE!

OF COURSE
YOU ABHORRENT
ABOMINATION! NOW!



MICROTRON
OR PROMETHEUS
IS MOVING
TOWARDS THE
COMMANDER!

WE'VE GOT
TO HELP!

HOW NANOTRON WHEN
WE CAN'T EVEN HELP
OURSELVES?!

AND ON THAT
CHEERY NOTE WE
LEAVE OUR INTRE-
PID TRAVELERS ..

AND JOURNEY TO
THE SUB MICROSCOPIC
MOLECULAR PLANE
HOMEWORLD

CHAPTER TWO: THOU SHALT HAVE NO FALSE GODS!

SUBZONE

HERE I AM, AKA, THE
LOWLIES, TELL THE
UNCLE RABBIT THE
MID-GRISHED THU
FOR WHOM HOMEWORLD
FORCE COMMANDER
HAS LITTLE LIFE SAVE
AS ON SAN C. FOR A
FOR H. ABOUT THE
BODY BANKS

MAKE WAY FOR
THE LIGHT

WAS THE
SALVING
LIFEHOLD
DEAD!

BACK AWAY SLEIM-SUCKER!
HIS BOOTS ARE MINE!

THE THREE PILGRIMS OF THE LIGHT MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE PLOTH AND DEEPERATION

NOT MY IDEA OF A
TICKET VACATION
SPOT

MY WORLD SPARTAK WOULD NEVER HAVE COUNTENANCED SUCH POVERTY THOSE WHO WOULD NOT WORK, WERE ELIMINATED

ONLY THE STRONG
SURVIVED EH ACRYEAR WELL, THERE
CI TENS WOULD BE STRONG

IF IT WERE NOT IN MY
BROTHER'S INTEREST TO
SEE HIM A WEAK

BUT I
COME TO OFFER
YOU ALL THE OPPORTUNITY
OF EARNING IN THE LIGHT,
OF BEING FILLED WITH ITS
POWER AND TOUCHED BY
ITS GRACE!

DRAW NIGH THE
TEMPLE OF LIGHT
CHILDREN OF DARKNESS!
SEE FOR YOURSELVES
WHAT WONDERS
AWAIT YOU, WHAT
FAVORS YOU
MAY FIND

YOU KNOW
THAT ABOVE THE
CEILING THAT IS YOUR SKY
A GREAT ONE CALLED THE
SUN SHINES, BRINGING ALL
WITH THE LIGHT!

SOME OF
YOU HAVE
SEEN IT
AND TOLD
THE OTHERS

ALL YOU
HAVE TO DO
IS PLAY
THE GAME!

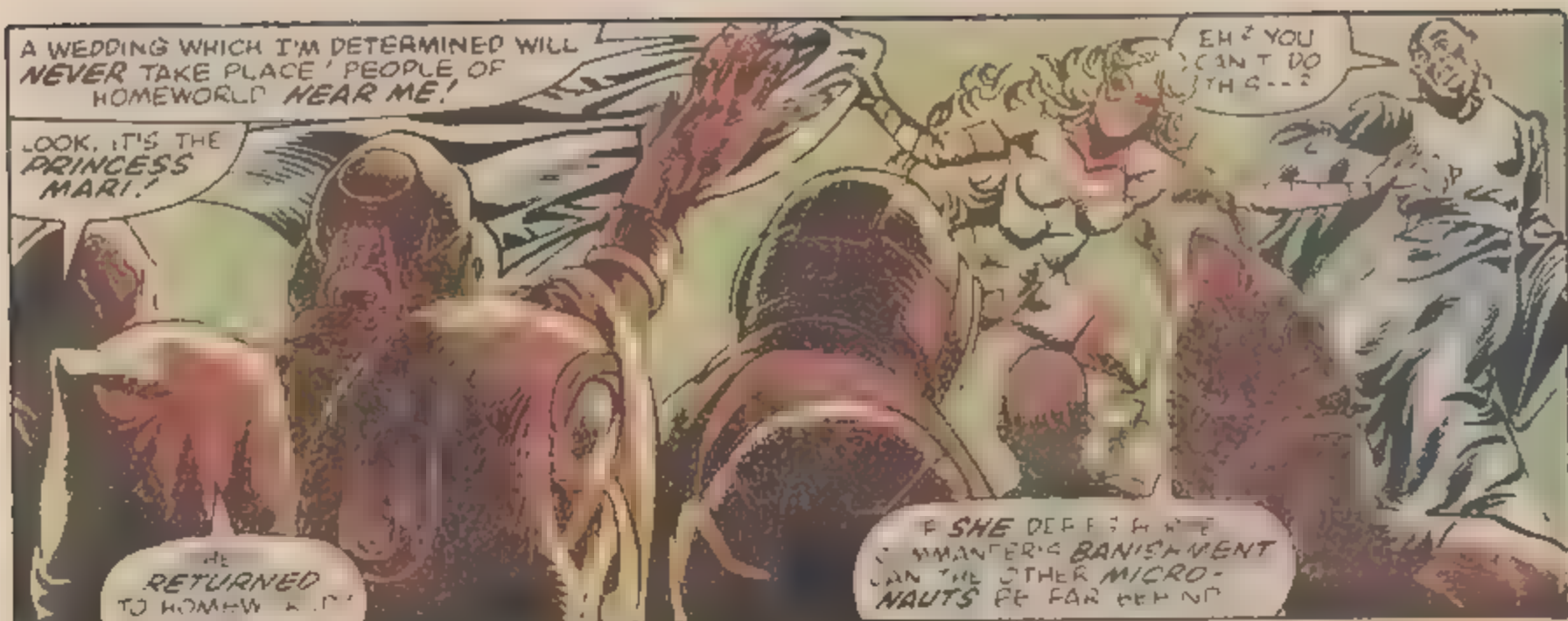
THE 'GAME' MACHINES OF CHANCE INTO WHICH THESE
PEOPLE'S FEATURES CAN FEED THEIR FEW HARD EARNED
TALS IN EXCHANGE FOR LIFE CREDITS!

THE PROMISE OF WINNING
THE ETERNAL LIFE IS A
TAL MOTIVATIONAL INCENTIVE
BO BUDDY!

THE GAME
BARON KARZA
MY BROTHER WILL
NOPE WHATEVER THEM
OF LIFE AND LIMB!

AND NOW MY OWN BROTHER ARGON,
REVIVES THE TYRANT'S SCHEME,
RETRAILING THE POPULACE TO PAY
FOR HIS ROYAL WEDDING TO THE
REBEL LEADER, SLUG!

SO THIS IS
THE NEW K.F.C.
FORCE COMMAND, IT
FOSTERED ON HOME
WORLD TO KEEP THE
LOWLIES IN LINE COME
--I WOULD HEAR MORE



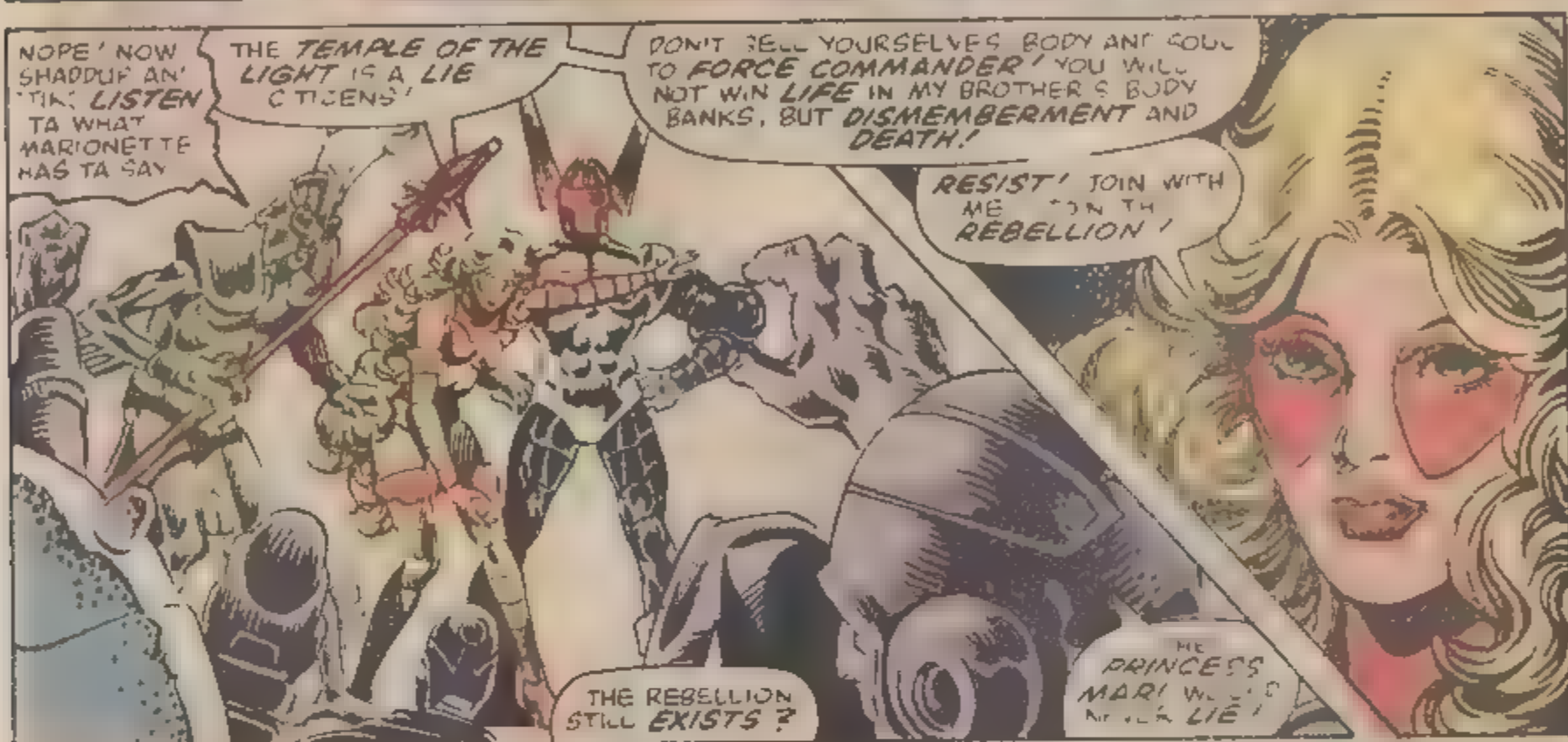
A WEDDING WHICH I'M DETERMINED WILL NEVER TAKE PLACE! PEOPLE OF HOMEWORLD HEAR ME!

LOOK, IT'S THE PRINCESS MARI!

EH? YOU CAN'T DO THIS--?

HE RETURNED TO HOMEWORLD!

IF SHE DEFEATS THE COMMANDER'S BANISHMENT CAN THE OTHER MICRO-NAUTS BE FAR BEHIND?



NOPE! NOW SHADDUP AN' LISTEN TA WHAT MARIONETTE HAS TA SAY

THE TEMPLE OF THE LIGHT IS A LIE CITIZENS!

DON'T TELL YOURSELVES BODY AND SOUL TO FORCE COMMANDER! YOU WILL NOT WIN LIFE IN MY BROTHER'S BODY BANKS, BUT DISMEMBERMENT AND DEATH!

RESIST! JOIN WITH ME IN THE REBELLION!

THE REBELLION STILL EXISTS?

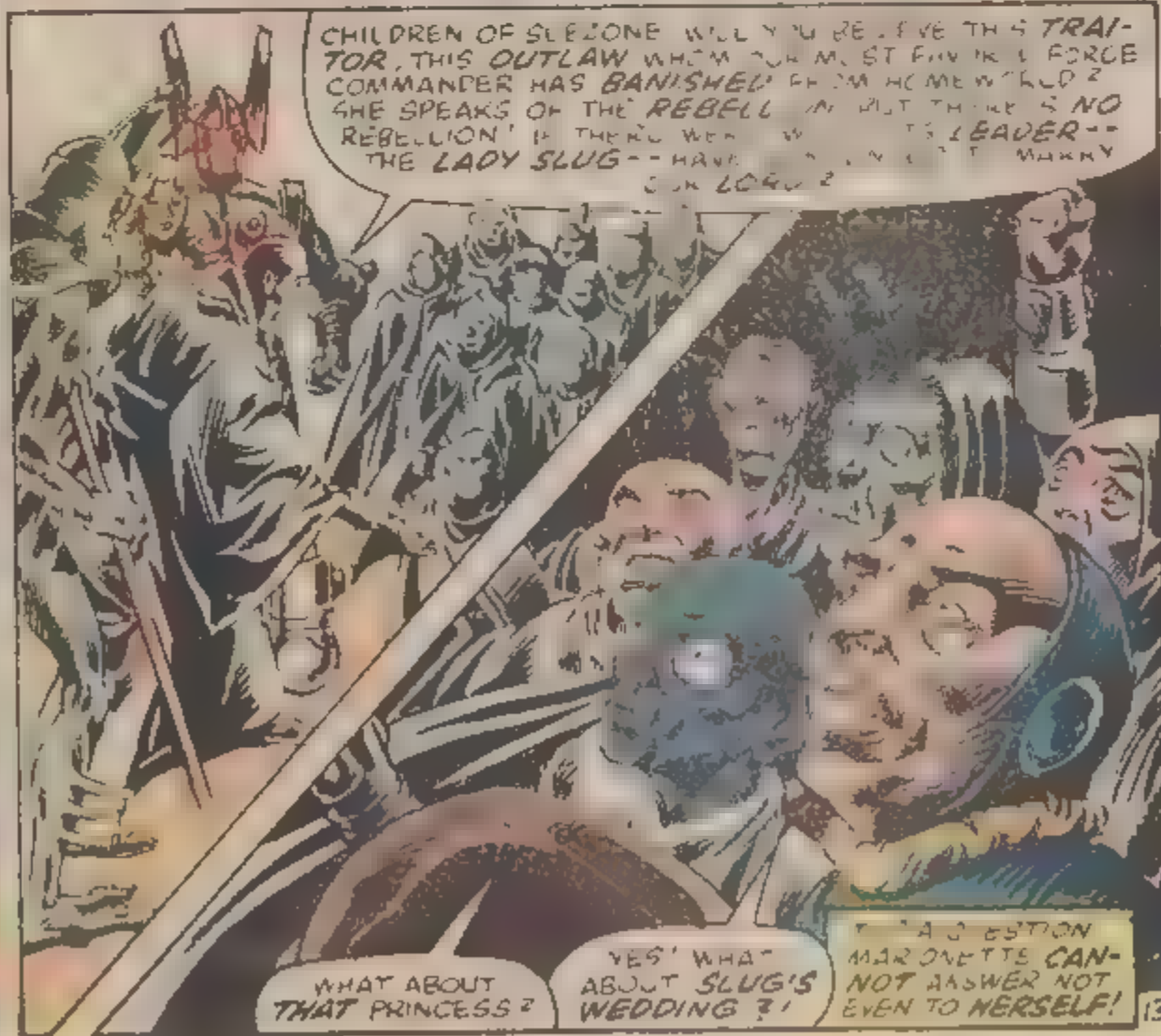
THE PRINCESS MARI WOULD NEVER LIE!



THOSE COVERING CATTLE BELIEVE EVERY WORD SHE TELLS THEM

OF COURSE HE TELLS THEM THE TRUTH!

HUSH! I WILL CALM THE CROWD! YOU FETCH THE DOG SOLDIERS!



CHILDREN OF SLEZONE WILL YOU BELIEVE THIS TRAITOR, THIS OUTLAW WHOM OUR MOST FAVORABLE FORCE COMMANDER HAS BANISHED FROM HOMEWORLD? SHE SPEAKS OF THE REBELLION BUT THERE IS NO REBELLION! IF THERE WERE, WHO IS ITS LEADER-- THE LADY SLUG-- HAVE YOU HEARD OF HER? MARRY ON, LADIES!

WHAT ABOUT THAT PRINCESS?

YES! WHAT ABOUT SLUG'S WEDDING?

IT'S A QUESTION MARIONETTE CANNOT ANSWER NOT EVEN TO HERSELF!

NOR IS SHE GIVEN TIME TO SEEK
AN ANSWER FOR THE DOG
SOLDIERS HAVE ARRIVED.

THE ONLY DARK-
NESS HERE
PRESENT IS IN THE
HEART OF THE
DARK SOUL!

A WISE MAN
SAYS
WISDOM IS THE
FORCES OF LIGHT
FIGHT WITH THE
DARKNESS!

I FEAR I
BROUGHT
TO MUCH
FORCE TO
BEAR UPON
THE PREST
PRINTED!

BE
PREPARED
FOR ANY-
THING!

WE DON'T
KNOW HOW
MANY
MICRO-
NAUTS
WE'RE
DEALING
WITH

NO JUST SO
MUCH SO WAS
NECESSARY
ACROVEAN

BEHOLD
A
MILKMAN

THERE IS NO DARKNESS IN THE ACROVEAN'S
BACKPACK. THE LIGHT WILL REVEAL
SEE THE SKY AGAIN

MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY BUG!

WITH AN ABILITY THAT IS INBORN THE FESTY INSECT, DRID BUG, DOES JAEN SE

SO LONG IT'S BEEN TIME GOOD TA T A KNOW YA!

WITH AN ABILITY THAT IS INBORN THE FESTY INSECT, DRID BUG, DOES JAEN SE

STRONG THAT HE WOULD NEED FOR

15

**THREE
AGAINST
A DOG
SOLDIER
SQUAD-
RON --**

--AND THEY'RE
PUTTING THOSE
STORM-TROOPERS
TO ROUT!

THE MICRONAUTS HAVE
NEVER BETRAYED
HOMEWORLD!

IF THEY
OPPOSE FORCE
COMMANDED--

-- THEN
THEIR
CASE MUST
BE OURS!

PICKING UP WEAPONS DROPPED BY FALLEN FOX SOLDIERS
OR TEARING OFF LENGTHS OF PIPE OR SLEEVING FISTS
IN ANGER, THE LOWLIES STREAM TOWARDS THE TEMPLE
OF THE LIGHT

THE GAME!
DESTROY THE
GAME!

AND THE
PRIESTS
WHO ROB

IT IS WORK OF NOT A WOMAN, AND
THE SHATTERED GAME MACHINES
SPILL THEIR LIFE CREDITS ONTO
THE STREET.

.. BUT MOST FOREGO MOMENTARY WEALTH
TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THOSE WHOM THEY
PERCEIVE TO BE THE SOURCE OF THEIR
GRIEVANCE

THEY RE
COMING
FOR US,
FATHER

FORGET THE
PRIESTS, MY
PEOPLE ' IT'S
THE DOG
SOLDIERS
WHO ENFORCE
ARSON'S
WILL

PRAY
FOR THEM
ALL THE TIME

AND
RUN!

**DISARM
THEM-- AND
ARM YOUR-
SELVES FOR
THE REBEL-
LION!**

WE LOWLIES--
FIGHT AGAINST
FORCE COMMANDER'S
DOG SOLDIERS?!

SOME OF THEM ARE PEOPLE
WHO STOP TO BATH IN THE
LIFE CREEK SANDS AND TAKE
THEM BENEATH THE PROBES

THE LOWLIES HAVE EVERY REASON TO FEAR THE HEAVILY ARMED AND DISCIPLINED DOG SOLDIERS. THEY ARE FORCE COMMANDER'S CRACK TROOPS -- THE ELITE -- PRESERVED IN THEIR PRIME THROUGH ORGAN AND LIMB TRANSPLANTS IN THE BODY BANKS.

BUT THE MICRONAUTS SHOW NO EVIDENCE OF FEARING THESE BUTCHERS FOR-HIRE, AND THEY INSPIRE BY EXAMPLE

ORGANS AND LIMBS TAKEN FROM THESE VERY LOWLIES!

STILL, THERE'D BE A RESISTANCE DOOMED TO DEFEAT BY THE SHEER ENORMITY OF THE ENEMY'S NUMBERS.



...WERE IT NOT FOR THE
ARRIVAL OF THE FORCES OF
THE REBELLION, LED BY
CAPTAIN MARGRACE
EGYPTA AND HER
RIDING DESERT DEMONS!



AT 'EM, BOYOS!
T'S NOT THE KIND
OF PLACE N WH CH
WE'RE USED TA
FIGHT N

NOT SO LONG AS
FORCE COMMANDER
THE SUN
SAND IS HAN
EGYPTA KENEA H
FUEL



--WE'LL JUST
HAVE TO DO OUR
DYIN' N
DARKNESS!

FOR THE
REBELLION!

FORTLY FLYING DOG SOL-
DIERS WERE IN THE
REBELS A TALE



SON O THE HIGH AN
ONLY THE NEW VA DID
T HAD LUCK VA BURE
AR IN THE DOG
SOLDIERS IN THE DR

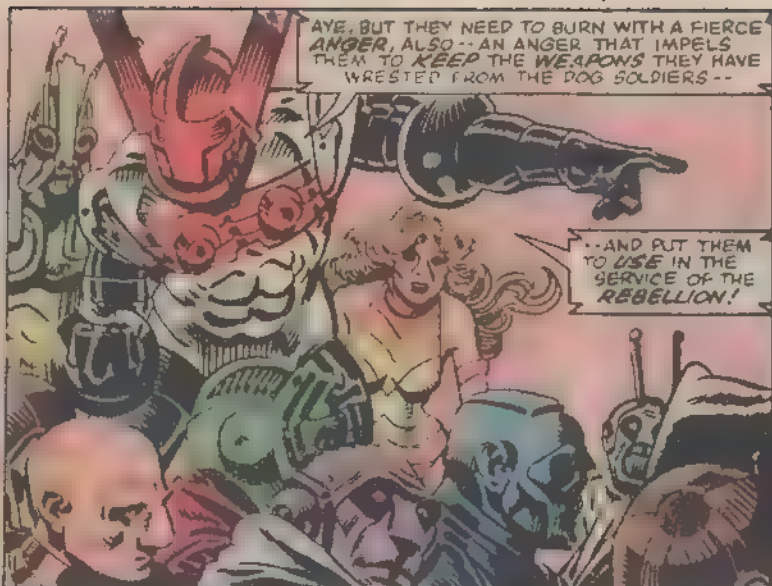
WE
WON!

TIS BUT ONE VICTORY
IN A GREATER WAR

DON'T BELITTLE THEM, ACRO-
YEAR - THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH OF
THAT ALL THEIR LIVES - THEY'VE
WON TODAY - THEY DESERVE TO
FEEL PROUD!



AYE, BUT THEY NEED TO BURN WITH A FIERCE
ANGER, ALSO -- AN ANGER THAT IMPELS
THEM TO KEEP THE WEAPONS THEY HAVE
WRESTED FROM THE DOG SOLDIERS --



--AND PUT THEM
TO USE IN THE
SERVICE OF THE
REBELLION!

SOME WILL HEED ACROYEAR'S WORD - OTHERS WILL RETURN TO
THEIR HOMES AND RESIST A OTHER WAYS

WE'VE GOT TO BE AWAY TO SANCTUARY
PRINCESS! THE PRIESTS ESCAPED
DOON FORCE COMMANDER WILL
KNOW OF OUR RAD



AN NO MATTER HOW
SUCCESSFUL OUR
ACTION HAS BEEN
TODAY -

THE LADY SLUG'S IM-
PENETRABLE MARRIAGE TO
ARGON WILL STILL HAVE A
DEMOLIZING EFFECT ON
THE RESISTANCE!



YES -- SHE WAS
THE REBELLEST
A 'KING' OF THE
LEADER IN THE
MICRONAUTS'
ABSENCE

I'VE GOT TO FIND
SUN'S MARGRACE.
FIND OUT WHY
SHE'S TURNED
TRAITOR OR
IF SHE HAS --



--EVEN IF IT
MEANS SEEKING
HER INSIDE THE
ROYAL PALACE
ITSELF!

MARIOWETTE KNOWS THE RISKS
INVOLVED WITHOUT HAVING TO
NUMBER THEM...



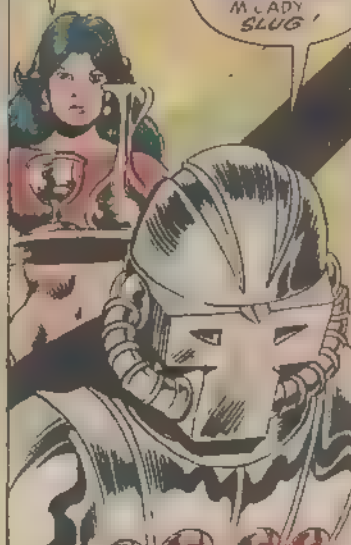
FOR THE ROYAL
PALACE, HIGH
ABOVE IN THE
SUNLIGHT OF
FIRST ZONE

IS THE SUPREME STRONG
HOLD OF ARGON, THE FIRST
SELF PROCLAIMED LORD OF
THE MICROVERSE

...FORCE COMMANDER!

SOME DRAPA
MADE FROM THE
SWEET PARES OF
FAK TROPICA
MILORD ARGON

YOU, WHO
WILL SOON
BE MY
BRIDE---MY
QUEEN---
NEED NOT
SERVE ME
M LADY
SLUG!



IT'S MY HONOR TO
DO SO MILORD--
AND MY MOST FER
VENT DESIRE!

THEN I WILL
DRINK YOUR
DRAPA, M LADY,
THOUGH, NO LONGER
BEING HUMAN--



--I
HAVE LITTLE
USE FOR IT!



YOU TREMBLE,
M LADY. AH, I
FORGOT-- THE
SIGHT OF WHAT
I HAVE BECOME
UNNERVES YOU



BUT I WILL
DRINK YOUR
POISON
LADY SLUG--

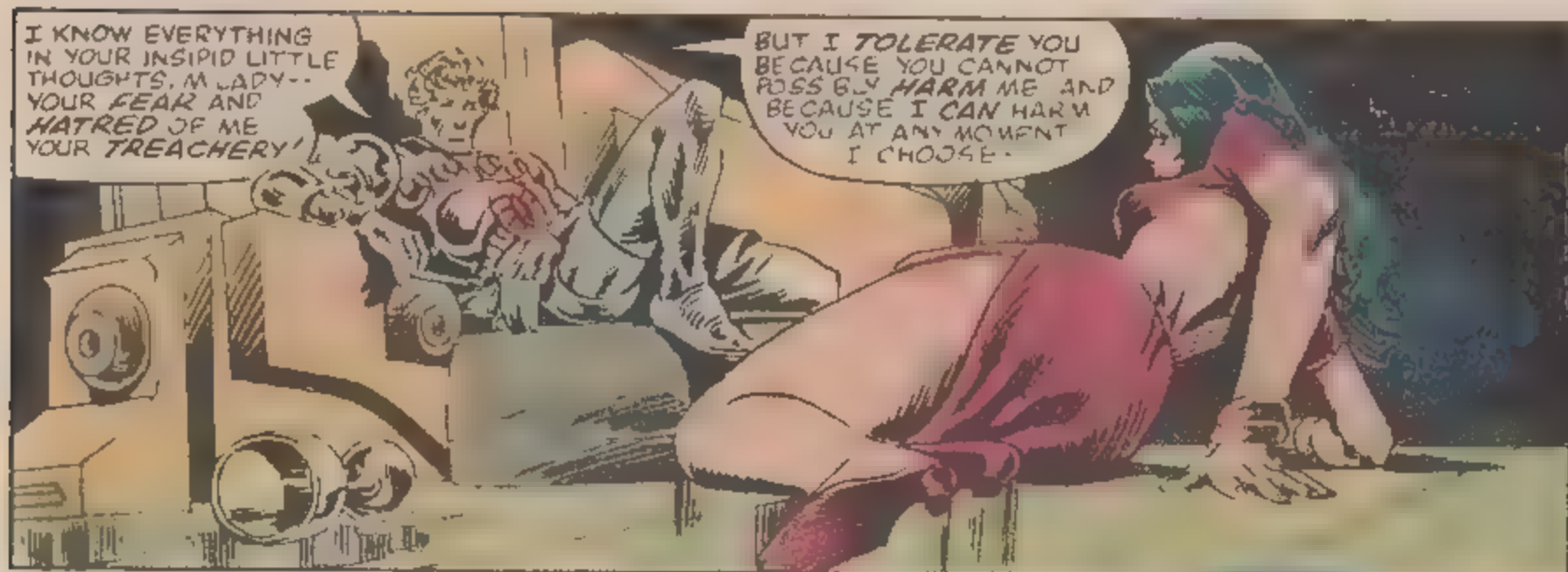
--IF ONLY
TO SHOW
YOU THAT
YOU CAN
NOT KILL
ONE WHO IS
NO LONGER
ALIVE!



Y YOU KNEW--?

SLAP

OH!



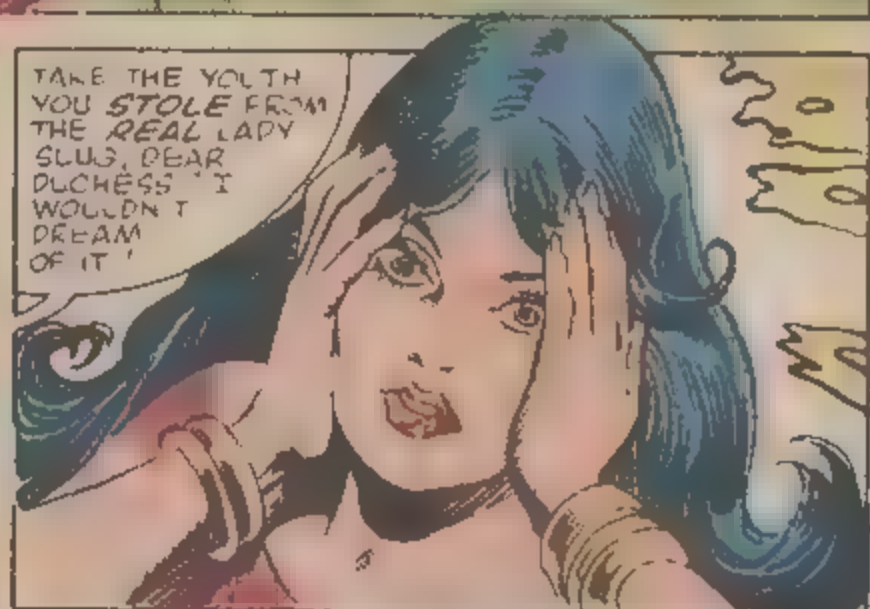
I KNOW EVERYTHING
IN YOUR INSIPID LITTLE
THOUGHTS, M LADY--
YOUR FEAR AND
HATRED OF ME
YOUR TREACHERY!

BUT I TOLERATE YOU
BECAUSE YOU CANNOT
POSSIBLY HARM ME AND
BECAUSE I CAN HARM
YOU AT ANY MOMENT
I CHOOSE.



MERELY BY EXERCISING
MY WILL TO
TRANSFORM YOU BACK
TO YOUR TRUE SELF
...DUCHESS
BELLADONNA!

NO! NOT MY
YOUTH! DON'T
TAKE MY
YOUTH!



TAKE THE YOUTH
YOU STOLE FROM
THE REAL LADY
SLUG, DEAR
DUCHESS. I
WOULDN'T
DREAM
OF IT!



FOR THE REAL SLUG
WOULD THEN REGAIN IT -
AND SHE UNLIKE YOU
MIGHT FIND SOME WAY
TO UPSET MY PLANS
EVEN FROM THE DARK
NESS OF MY DUN-
GEONS!

NO I WILL
NOT HARM YOU,
DUCHESS

--FOR MY PATHETIC SUB-
JECTS BELIEVE YOU TO BE
THE REAL SLUG, LEADER
OF THEIR RIDICULOUS
REBELLION AND THE
EFFECT UPON THEM OF
MY MARRYING YOU WILL
BE INCALCULABLE!



I CAN THINK
OF NOTHING
TO BETTER
CONFOUNDE
MY RULE!

HE'S A
MONSTER!

I TRANSFERRED BODIES
WITH THE REAL SLUG
THINKING ARSON TO BE A
MAN - A FALE IMITATION
OF BARON KARZA -
THROUGH WHOM I COULD
RULE HOMEWORLD HOLDING
HIM BY VIRTUE OF MY
BEAUTY!

BUT HE HAS NO
NEED FOR
BEAUTY NOW -
FOR ANYTHING



DALLAN AND SERP'S I
CANNOT BE WED TO
SUCH A CREATURE!

THE DUNGEONS OF FIRST ZONE--MOCKINGLY REFERRED TO BY ALL AND SLANDERED AS 'THE PLEASURE PITS'

OHMMMMMM

I AM AN ANGRY MATE LADY SLUG!

BY THE BODY BANKS--SHE'S LYING SO STILL!

BUT DOCTOR DEGRAYDE WAS HERE JUST A SHORT WHILE AGO! HE PRONOUNCED HER **HEALTHY--**

- AND SWORE HE'D HAVE MY HEAD ON A STAKE IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO HER WHILE IN MY CARE

CURSED REBEL! AWAKE! BREATHE DAMN YOU! IF YOU DIE, I DIE!

AND I WANT TO LIVE!

YOU SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE SWEAKING ALLEGIANCE TO ARGON SLUM!

ARRGH!! MY EYES!

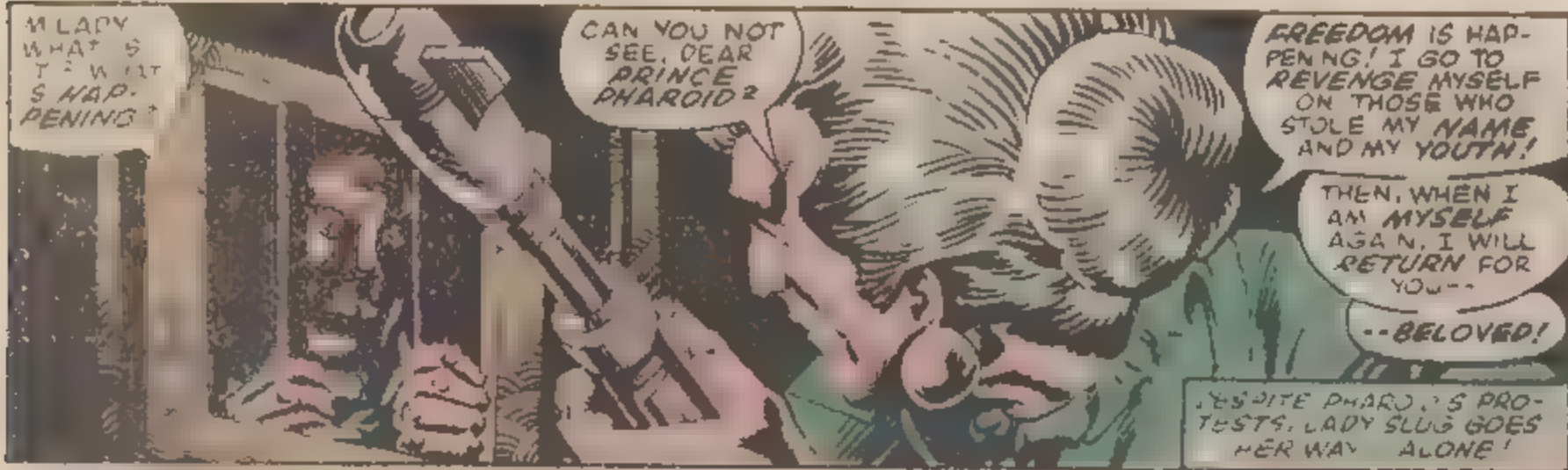
FEAR NOT MY DEAR ITS SOLD-- THE PAIN WILL ONLY LAST LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO SIEGE YOUR LASERSONIC--

AND END YOUR PAIN FOREVER!

VREET

ARGON AND ILL WANCE KNEW WHAT THEY HAD TO PLAN FROM AN WOMAN. A CITY TH- HALE TO ARGON. THE A NUTTER TO THE A SLACK.

IT'S NOW! THE A DOOM IN THE ROYAL PALACE!



M LADY
WHAT'S
T'WIT
S HAP-
PENING?

CAN YOU NOT
SEE, DEAR
PRINCE
PHAROID?

FREEDOM IS HAP-
PENING! I GO TO
REVENGE MYSELF
ON THOSE WHO
STOLE MY NAME
AND MY YOUTH!

THEN, WHEN I
AM MYSELF
AGAIN, I WILL
RETURN FOR
YOU--

--BELOVED!

ESCAPE PHAROID'S PRO-
TESTS, LADY SLUG GOES
HER WAY ALONE!



ALL ABOUT
THE SIGHT OF
MICRO NAKRA
WE RETURN YOU
TO EARTH

.. AND THE
RUNG OF
H.E.L.L.

CHAPTER THREE: THE DEVIL, YOU SAY?



I THINK
PROFES-
SOR PRO-
METHEUS--

--THAT WE MAY
COMMENCE CHAMAN EX-
RANS MIND-PROBE!

WITH
PLEASURE..
COMPUTREX!
HEH HEH..
HEH!



IF THOSE
PROBE-NEEDLES
PENETRATE MY
MIND, I'M
FUNKED!

BUT WHAT
IS IT MATTER?
I'VE FAILED AS
TEAM LEADER

BECAUSE OF ME
THE MICRONAUTS
HAVE EITHER DIED OR
DISAPPEARED!

COMMANDER RANN PUTS UP NO STRUGGLE TO FREE HIMSELF CERTAIN THAT HE HAS LED HIS BELOVED MICRONAUTS TO DISASTER. HE RESIGNS HIMSELF TO HIS FATE THEN HE SEES.



SOMETHING
EMERGING
FROM THE
PROMETHEUS
PIT!

DEVIL!
THEN HE
DIDN'T DIE!
HE'S ALIVE!

YES--ALL 6 RATS BURNED BLACK FROM
COMPUTEX'S LASER BURNST, & 5 FLUR
CHANGED AT 10, UNDER MAGENTA



THE TRUE
NATURE IS IN
MIND AND
HEART!

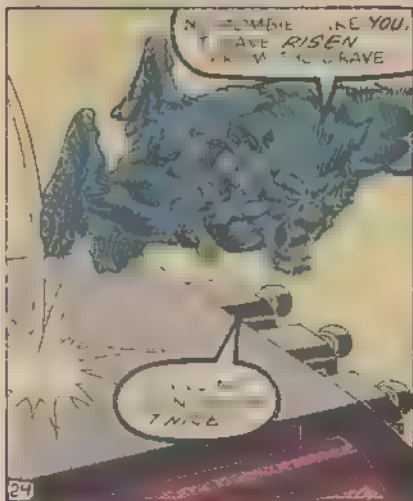
SOMEONE WITH THE PROMETHEUS PIT PREVENTED ME FROM
DEATH--TELEPATHICALLY THAT DEVIL STILL LIVED

BUT NOW HIS MIND IS OPEN TO
ME--AND HE'S MORE SAVAGE
MORE OF AN ANIMAL THAN
EVER

RANN IS
NOT THE
ONLY ONE TO
BECOME
AWARE OF DEVIL'S
PRESENCE

PROMETHEUS--THE
ANIMAL LIVES! HE
EMERGES FROM
YOUR PIT!

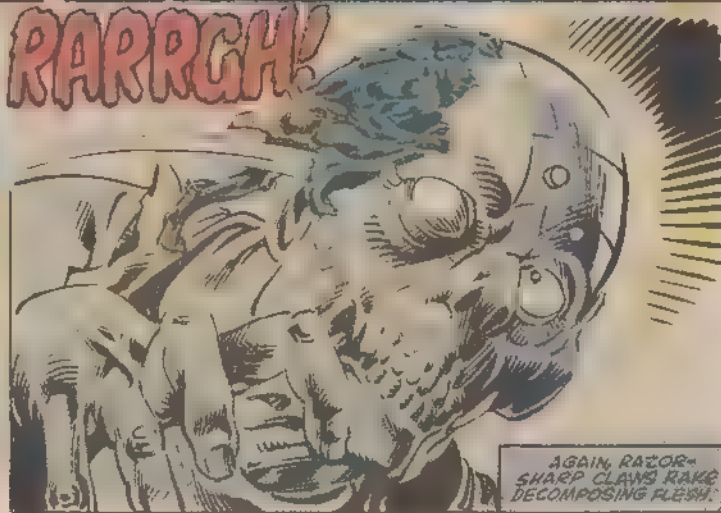
THEN HE...
WILL DIE...
AGAIN...
COMPUTEX!



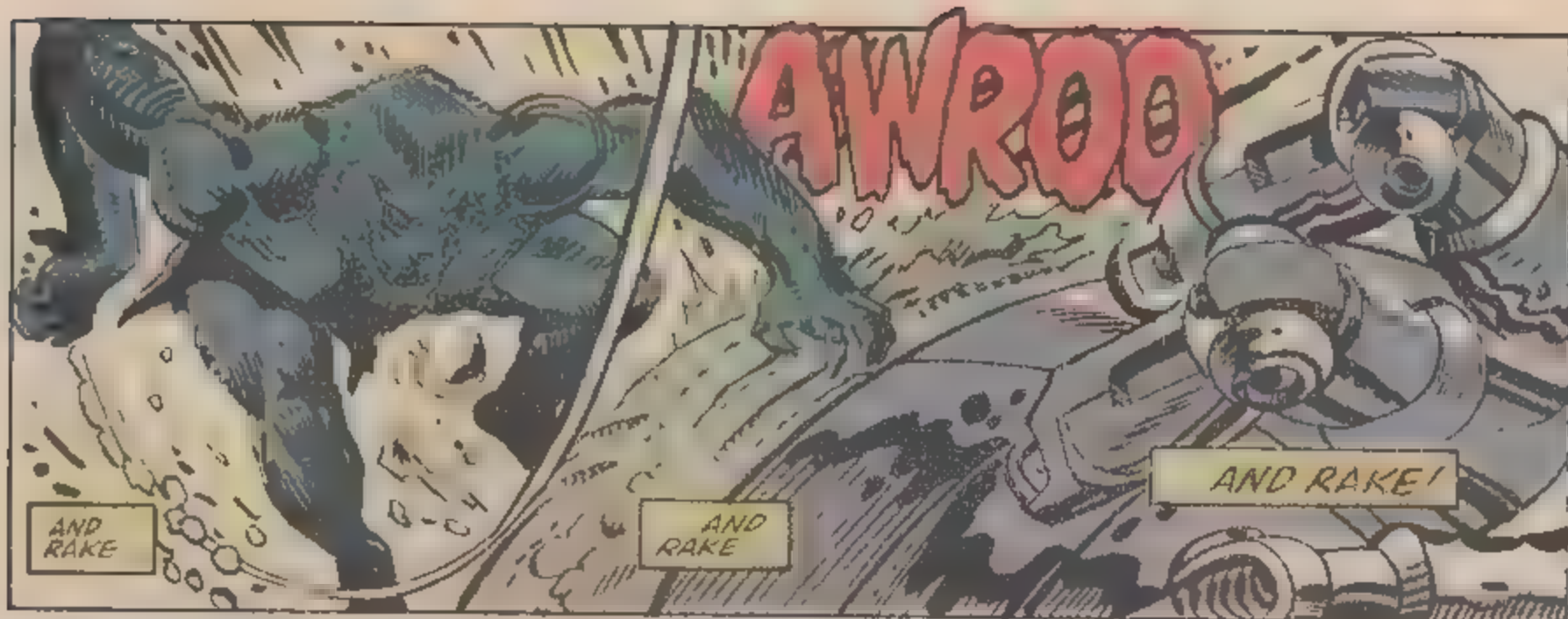
NOW I HAVE RISEN
FROM MY GRAVE

THREE

RARRGH!



AGAIN, RAZOR-
SHARP CLAWS RAKE
DECOMPOSING FLESH.



SOMEWHERE BENEATH THAT MORTIFIELD MASS LIES A BRAIN THOUGH THAT BRAIN IS ITSELF INCAPABLE OF EXPERIENCING PAIN...

...IT IS CONNECTED TO CIRCUITRY WHICH MOTIVATES THE ROBOT-HALF OF PROMETHEUS'S BODY!

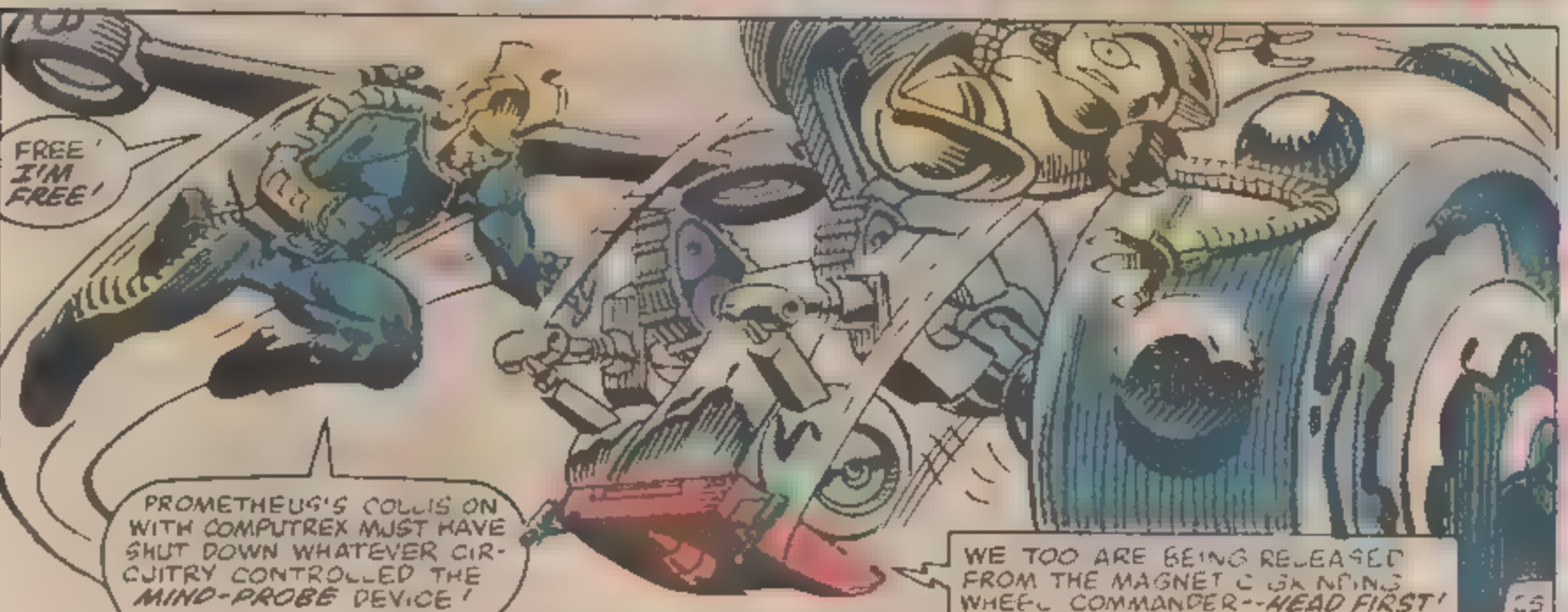


STOP HIM PROMETHEUS HE IS SEVERING THE COMPUTER-LINK THAT TIES YOU TO ME



TOO LATE I CAN NO LONGER CONTROL YOU-- NO LONGER ANIMATE YOU!

LOOK OUT YOU FOOLING MONKERS YOU'RE ALL HUNG RIGHT INTO ONE OF MY MONITOR-SCREENS!

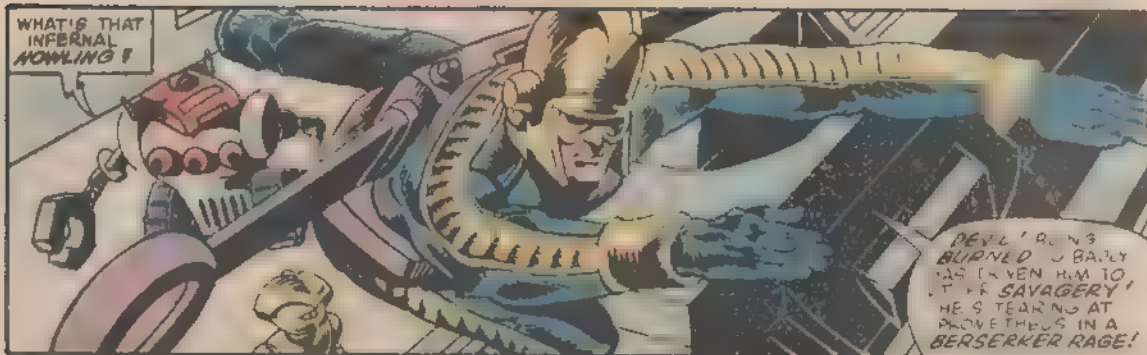


FREE I'M FREE!

PROMETHEUS'S COLLISION WITH COMPUTREX MUST HAVE SHUT DOWN WHATEVER CIRCUITRY CONTROLLED THE MIND-PROBE DEVICE!

WE TOO ARE BEING RELEASED FROM THE MAGNET C GRIPPING WHEEL COMMANDER--HEAD FIRST!

WHAT'S THAT
INFERNAL
HOWLING?

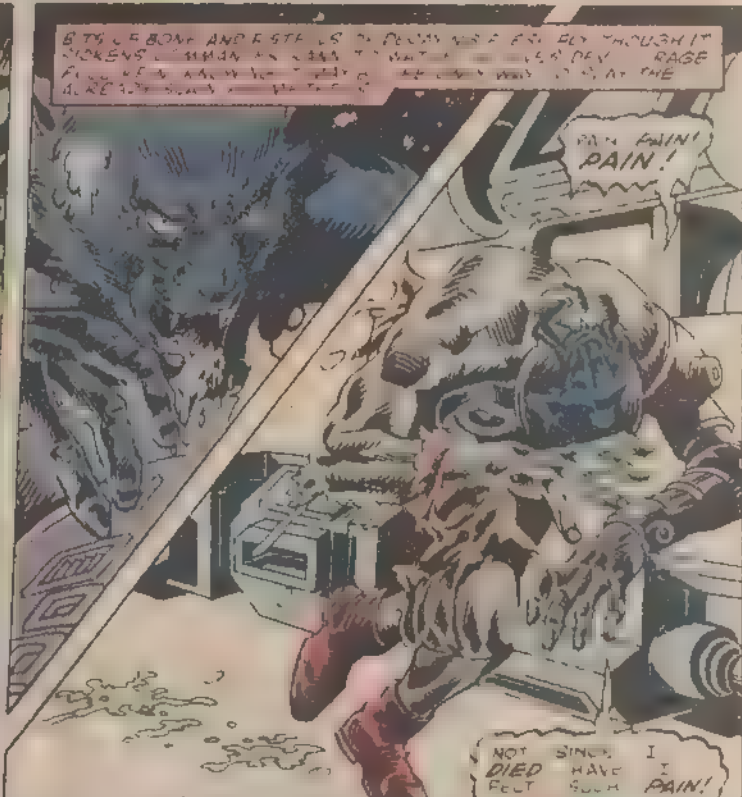


DEVIL'S RINGS
BURNED U BARELY
HAS GIVEN HIM TO
THE SAVAGERY!
HE'S TEARING AT
PROTECTOR'S IN A
BERSERKER RAGE!

AND THAT, DEAR FRIENDS AND FAN
ADDICTS IS NO UNDERSTATEMENT!



BIT OF BONE AND STEEL TO DESTROY A FIGHTER, BUT HE THOUGHT IT
WICKENS. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD.
HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD.
HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD. HE'S A BASTARD.



PAIN!
PAIN!
PAIN!

NOT SINCE I
DIED HAVE I
FEEL SUCH PAIN!



YOU LURCH BLINDLY TOWARDS MY
CONSOLES AGAIN? BACK
'BEAST'! DIE IF YOU MUST--
BUT DO NOT TAKE ME
WITH YOU

ZZRRAK

THE
MASTER
AS MASTER
ATTACKS
SERVANT

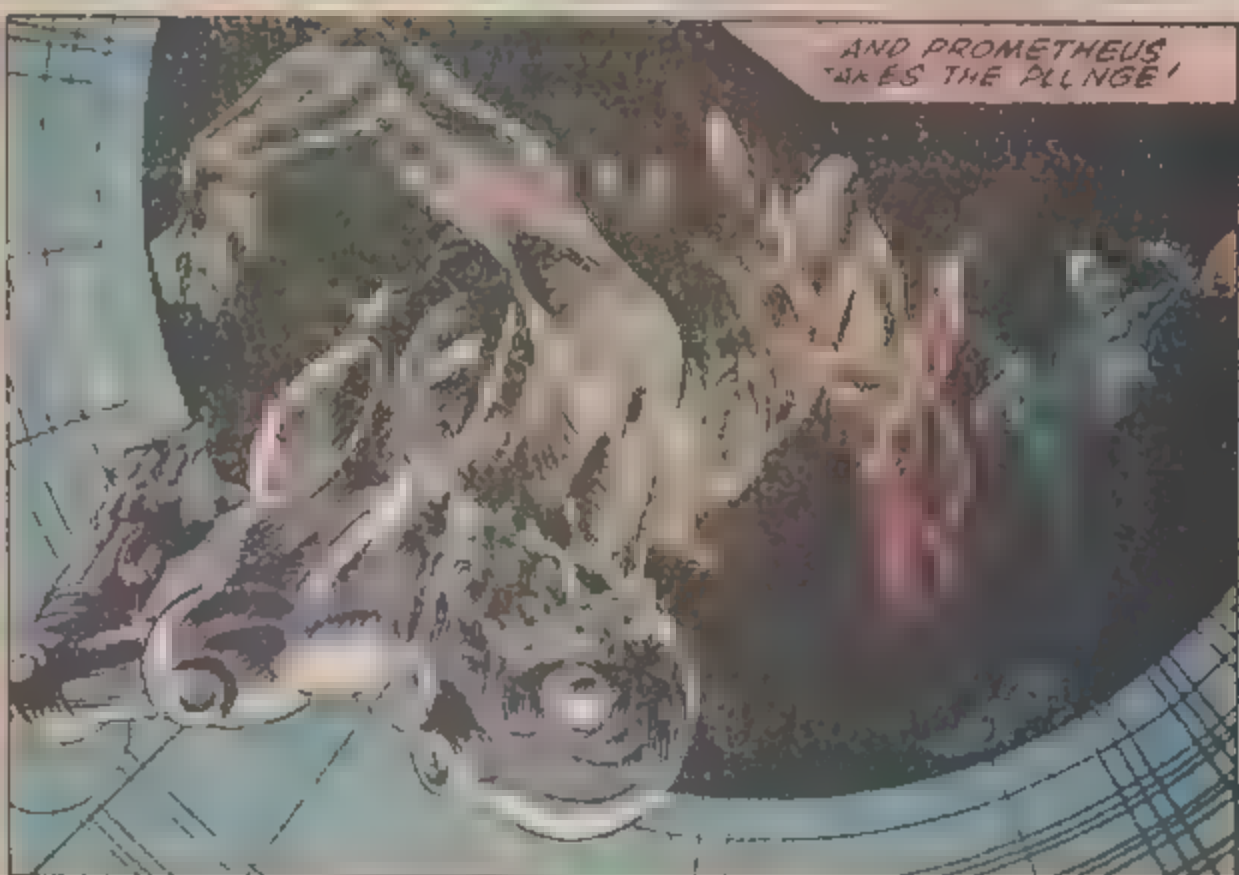


COMPUTREX IS DRIVING
PROMETHEUS BACK
TOWARDS THE PIT
NANOTRON

WELL, AS I SEE THE
ENGINE, MICRO
TRON, IN THIS CASE I
THINK WE SHOULD GIVE
HIM A HAND!



THEY



AND PROMETHEUS
TAKES THE PLUNGE!



THE PROMETHEUS PIT IS NOT BEEN
ACTIVATED. PROMETHEUS WON'T PLUNGE
THROUGH INTO THE MICROVERSE!

BUT IT
APPEARS
BOTTOM-
LESS!

HOW DO
EVEN EVER
SURVIVE
THIS FALL



HOW DO
EVEN EVER
SURVIVE
THIS FALL

BUT IF THE PIT IS NO MORE
THAN A CATCH-BASIN NOW,
THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN USE
IT TO RETURN TO THE
MICROVERSE!

WE CAME ALL
THE WAY TO FLORIDA--
FOUGHT COMPUTREX
AND PROMETHEUS...



FOR
NOTHING! 27

BUT THE BATTLE
IS NOT YET DONE!



THE BERSERKER MIND OF A BLOOD-
LUSTING BEAST HAS REMEMBERED
YET ANOTHER FOE AS YET
UNACCOUNTED FOR!

COMPUTREX!

AWROO KERASH!!

AND, AS HE DID TO THE ARMY
MATTER OF PROBLEMS, THE
HOWLING DEVIL NOW DOES

TO THE
BRAIN
CIRCUITRY
OF THE
LIVING
COMPUTER!

NO!

GET
OUT
OF--

--MY MIND!

DEVIL! STOP! YOU'VE
DONE ENOUGH!

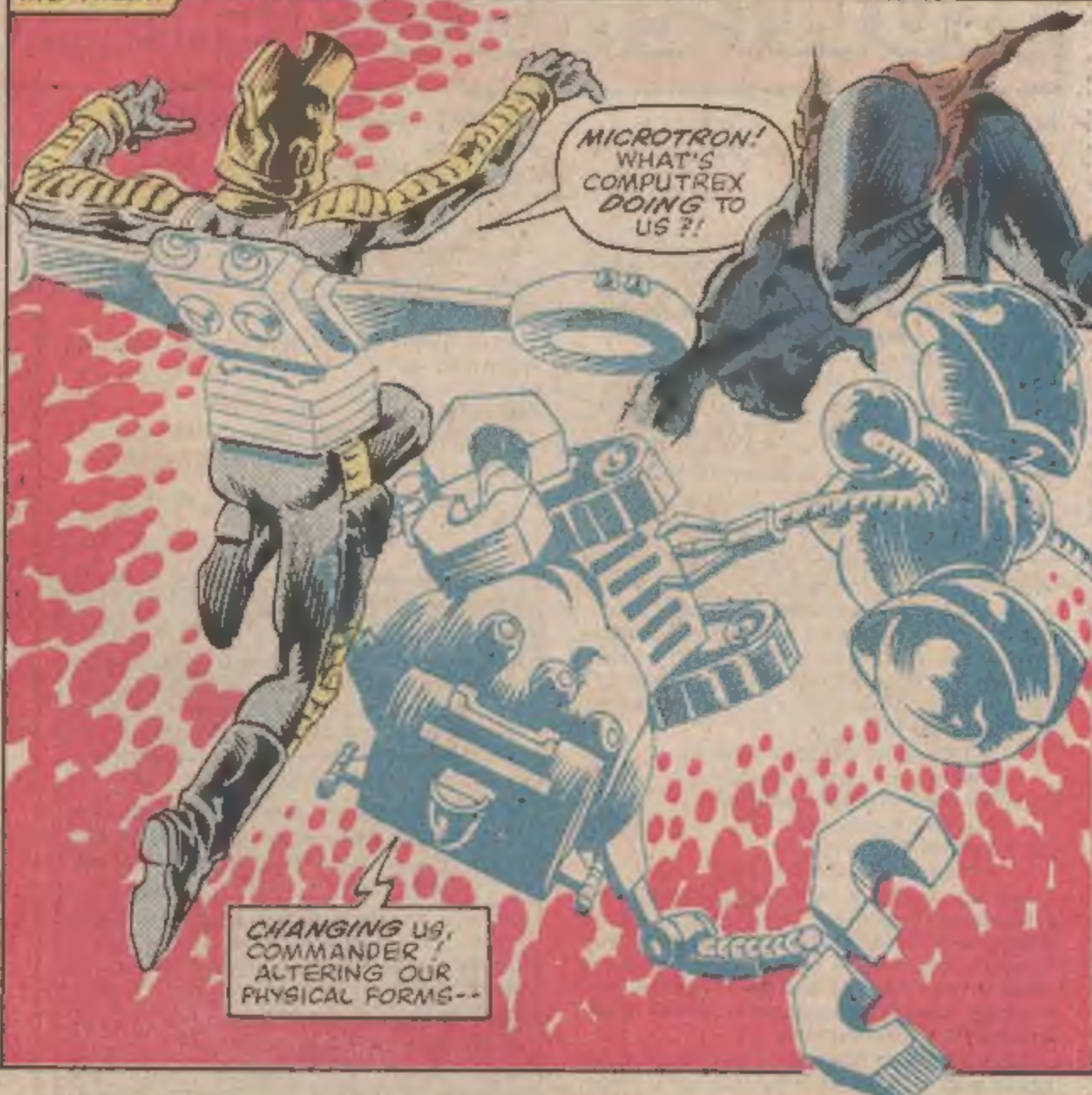
COMPUTREX
IS GOING TO
BLOW!

YES! MIND--SLIPPING!
CIRCUITS--OVERLOADING!
YOU'VE--KILLED ME--
COMMANDER! BUT I--
WON'T DIE--ALONE!

IF I--RETURN TO--
ENERGY-FORM--
I'M TAKING YOU
WITH ME!



A BURST OF PUREST LIGHT-ENERGY LEAPS FROM THE LIVING COMPUTER AND STRIKES THE MICRONAUT QUARTET! THOUGH THEY FEEL NOTHING, THEY CAN SENSE THAT THE LIGHT IS ALTERING THEIR ATOMIC STRUCTURE--TRANSFORMING THEM!



MICROTRON!
WHAT'S
COMPUTREX
DOING TO
US?!

CHANGING US,
COMMANDER!
ALTERING OUR
PHYSICAL FORMS--

--AND
TRANSFORMING
US INTO WAVES
OF LIGHT!



THEN, AS IF COMPUTREX
HAD TURNED A SWITCH,
THE LIGHT GOES...OFF!

FAREWELL--COMMANDER
RANN! YOU MAY HAVE--
DISPATCHED ME TO THE--
ETHER ONCE AGAIN...

...BUT I'VE--
DISPATCHED YOU--
TO ETERNITY!



THEN THERE IS NO
MORE TIME FOR
EXULTATION, NO MORE
TIME FOR VENGEANCE.
COMPUTREX FEELS HIS
MIND GOING, HIS CIR-
CUITRY SHUTTING DOWN...

...AND THERE ISN'T EVEN TIME FOR HIM TO
SCREAM, AS H.E.L.L. GOES ALL TO HELL!

NEXT
MONTH:

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT!

FEATURING THAT ARCH-ASSASSIN
FROM THE PAGES OF THE X-MEN...

ARCADE!

BULLPEN BULLETIN SPECIAL

STANDARD INTRO...

I'm the Editor-in-Chief here, and have I got stuff to tell you...

WANT A JOB?

In my last column in *Marvel Fanfare* this month I announced that Marvel is looking for new creative people. Business is booming, and we'd like to expand — but there just plain aren't enough really talented people available! We've always welcomed submissions, but now we're asking for them. You'll have to buy or borrow a copy of *Marvel Fanfare* #3 to learn the requirements for the various types of submissions appropriate to each of the various comic art disciplines, because I'm not going to repeat all that here. It could be worth the \$1.25 investment! Marvel creators do vary, very well!

ALONG THOSE LINES...

Last month I said I might explain a little bit about what I look for in a story. Okay.

First, that it is a story and not just a piece of a story, or a string of events. A story, in the simplest possible terms, is a conflict and its resolution. "War Averted" qualifies as a story. So does "Blaze Extinguished". For virtually all stories written involving characters a bit more is required:

- The characters must be introduced.
- Their situation must be established.
- The conflict must be introduced.
- Suspense must be built.
- A climax must be reached.
- A resolution must be achieved.

Little Miss Muffet, War and Peace, and everything in between accomplish this. When I evaluate a story, should one of the essential elements listed above be missing — say, the characters are not introduced properly when they are brought onstage — I immediately suspect that the author of the "story" knoweth not what he is doing.

Second, I look for how well the story is told. Is the conflict worthwhile? Is the climax exciting? Is the resolution satisfying? Is the plot good? Are there interesting twists and turns? Is there a theme? Is there character development? Is it dramatic? Is it entertaining? This is the really important stuff. It should go without saying that a writer or a prospective writer should know enough to meet the fundamental requirements of a story. It's the power and the passion and drama and characterization that I really look for. That's what we want here at Marvel.

REGARDING OUR NEW INCENTIVE PLAN FOR CREATORS...

Several people wrote in to ask whether this new incentive plan announced in this column a couple of months back would drive up the prices of our comics. Below is my reply to one of those correspondents:

Dear Mr. Lantz: February 24, 1982

We expect that our new incentive payment policy will help us hold the price line.

In the past we were obligated to dramatically increase the rates paid to creators annually, to keep up with inflation. Now their "increases" are in their own hands. In effect, because their payment is tied to the sales performance of the books they create. Our payments to them increase only when the sales go up. When sales go up, our profits go up too. Why raise prices when we're making money.

Art and Editorial costs are no longer a factor affecting the price of our comics.

Best

Jim Shooter

Jim Shooter

JS:gw

FROM THE FILES OF J.S....

I thought you might be interested in seeing one of my recent jolly little missives to our creative folks...

To: Letterers

12731

Re: Thought Balloons

When you make thought balloons, please make the pointer-bubbles a little bigger.

They're getting lost and colored over by the engravers.



You just don't see interoffice correspondence like that at IBM.

AND NOW...

Here ends the episode. Thanks for reading!
Best

Jim Shooter
Jim Shooter

THE HYPE BOX

Get a load of...

KA-ZAR #17 — BRUCE JONES and guest-penciler **RON FRENZ** have come up with the guaranteed most off-beat tale of the year as Ka-Zar, Snanna, Zabu, and private-eye Scoff Brannigan (who?) engage in a multi-level adventure that I don't think I'll be talking about for months to come!

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #69 — You demanded it (and how!) — you got it (and how!) the return of *Cloak and Dagger*!

MARVEL TEAM-UP #120 — Spider-Man teams up with the swashbuckling hero of the 1930's, *Dominic Fortune*! Only Dom is now in his seventies! What's he been up to? Read it and find out!

WHAT IF #34 — The Marvel Universe will never be the same after this special all humor issue featuring a zillion short spoofs on ourselves by a multitude of contributors, including MILLER, BYRNE, CLAREMONT, SIENKIEWICZ, and HEMBECKI!

MARVEL CHECKLIST

- ☐ **MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #90** — Written by JAN STRNAD. Pencils by ALAN KUPPERBERG. Inks by CHIC STONE. *The Thing and Spider-Man!*
- ☐ **TEAM AMERICA #3** — Plot by DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT. Script by GARY COHN. Pencils by MIKE VOSBURG. Inks by VINCE COLLETTA.
- ☐ **SPIDER-WOMAN #45** — Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT. Art by STEVE LEIALOHA.
- ☐ **G. I. JOE #2** — Written by LARRY HAMA. Pencils by DON PERLIN. Inks by JACK ABEL.
- ☐ **DAZZLER #18** — Written by DANNY FINGEROTH. Pencils by FRANK SPRINGER. Inks by VINCE COLLETTA.
- ☐ **KA-ZAR #17** — Written by BRUCE JONES. Breakdowns by RON FRENZ. Finishes by STEVE MITCHELL. A very off-beat tale (see Hype Box). Plus *Tales of Zabu* written by BRUCE JONES — with art by VAL MAYERIK.
- ☐ **DENNIS THE MENACE #10** — Written by FRED TOOLE. Art by THE KETCHAM STUDIOS.
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #185** — Written by FRANK MILLER. Breakdowns by FRANK MILLER. Finishes by KLAUS JANSON.
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #231** — Written by ROGER STERN. Breakdowns by JOHN ROMITA JR. Finishes by JIM MOONEY.
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #272** — Written by J. M. DeMATTEIS. Pencils by MIKE ZECK. Inks by JOHN BEATTY.
- ☐ **THOR #322** — Written by DOUG MOENCH. Pencils by ALAN KUPPERBERG. Inks by JIM MOONEY.
- ☐ **INCRONAUTS #44** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Breakdowns by GIL KANE. Finishes by DANNY BLANARD.
- ☐ **GHOST RIDER #71** — Written by J. M. DeMATTEIS. Breakdowns by DON PERLIN. Finishes by DANNY BLANARD.
- ☐ **MOON KNIGHT #22** — Written by DOUG MOENCH. Pencils and inks by BILL SIENKIEWICZ.

DOCTOR STRANGE #54 — Written by J. M. DeMATTEIS. Pencils by BRENT ANDERSON. Inks by JOSEF RUBINSTEIN. Plus a framing sequence by ROGER STERN, with pencils by PAUL SMITH and inks by TERRY AUSTIN.

☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #274** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Art by SAL BUSCEMA.

☐ **AVENGERS #222** — Plot by JIM SHOOTER. Script by STEVEN GRANT. Breakdowns by GREG LARROQUE. Finishes by BRETT BREEDING.

☐ **CONAN #137** — Written by BRUCE JONES. Pencils and inks by ALFREDO ALCALA.

☐ **MARVEL TALES #142** — Reprinting *Amazing Spider-Man* #5, by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO, featuring Spidey's first confrontation with Doctor Doom!

☐ **X-MEN #180** — Written by CHRIS CLAREMONT. Pencils by guest artist BRENT ANDERSON. Inks by BOB WACEK. The X-Men versus... *Beleaguer!*

☐ **ROM #33** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Breakdowns by SAL BUSCEMA. Finishes by JOE SINNOTT.

☐ **POWER MAN/IRON FIST #84** — Written by JO DUFFY. Breakdowns by DENNIS COWAN. Finishes by STEVE MITCHELL.

☐ **MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS (Limited Series) #3** — Story by MARK GRUENWALD, BILL MANTLO, and STEVE GRANT. Script by BILL MANTLO. Breakdowns by JOHN ROMITA JR. Finishes by PABLO MARCOS. The conclusion of Marvel's first miniseries.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #245** — Written by John BYRNE. Pencils and inks by JOHN BYRNE.

☐ **MARVEL TEAM-UP #120** — Written by J. M. DeMATTEIS. Pencils by KERRY GAMMILL. Inks by MIKE ESPOSITO. Spider-Man and *Dominic Fortune!* (See Hype Box.)

☐ **IRON MAN #161** — Written by DENNIS O'NEAL. Pencils by LUKE McDONNELL. Inks by DAN GREEN.

☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #69** — Written by BILL MANTLO. Breakdowns by ED HANNIGAN. Finishes by AL MILGROM. The return of *Cloak and Dagger!*

☐ **DEFENDERS #110** — Written by J. M. DeMATTEIS. Breakdowns by DON PERLIN. Finishes by JOE SINNOTT.

☐ **STAR WARS #62** — Written by DAVID MICHELINIE. Breakdowns by WALT SIMONSON. Finishes by TOM PALMER.

☐ **MASTER OF KUNG FU #115** — Written by DOUG MOENCH. Pencils and inks by GENE DAY.

☐ **WHAT IF #34** — Special humor issue, featuring a zillion short bits by just about everyone you can imagine! (See Hype Box.)

MARVEL MAGAZINES

☐ **CRAZY #68** — A *Crazy Super Special* featuring 20% classic reprint material and 80% new stuff — including a re-worded version of the death of Phoenix that you're either gonna love — or hate! Plus, an all new *Crazy* game, "Dr. Strange's Haunted Pathways, the Game of Mystic Mindrot" by STEVE SKATES and STEVE MELLOR, and, of course, our regular features will be here, along with a couple of surprises!

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #78** — Cover by EARL NOREM. Written by MICHAEL FLEISHER. Pencils and inks by PABLO MARCOS.

☐ **BIZARRE ADVENTURES #32** — This issue's theme: "Gods!" And wait'll you see what LARRY HAMA, TOM DeFALCO, MARK ARMSTRONG, ALAN ZELENETZ, STEVE SMALLWOOD, STEVE SKATES, AL MILGROM, MARK GRUENWALD, VAL MAYERIK, ANN NOCENTI and GREG LARROQUE have come up with to fit it. Cover by JOE JUSKO.

MARVEL SUPER SPECIALS

☐ **THE CONAN MOVIE** — At last! Marvel's adaptation of the movie everyone's been waiting for. Adapted (from John Miles' screenplay), penciled, inked and colored by JOHN BUSCEMA, with script by MICHAEL FLEISHER. Plus: articles on the film by DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT, and lots of breathtaking color stills from the film!

MICROMAILS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

ALLEN MILGROM
EDITOR
ANN NOCENTI
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Bill and Steve,

I've just started reading MICRONAUTS #39 and I love the explosive action. The idea of the HMS Endeavor warping through the cover of MICRONAUTS #1 was fascinating. The heightened drama of having Lady Cilicia meet with King Argon and then send her Acroyear Assassins after her estranged lover had me on the edge of my seat.

But, at the end, the Micros are washed down a sewer. I don't get it. Is that an ending? It didn't make a whole lot of sense. I hope MICRONAUTS #40 clears this sequence up.

One more thing: Who was that guy who opened the door of the comic book shop just in time for the Endeavor to escape?

Todd Tracy
8265 Del Harren Road
Dundalk, MD 21222

By now you know that MICRONAUTS #40 did answer your question, Todd. Sorry our cliff-hanger ending left you hanging (but, then, that's the point, isn't it?). The bearded gent behind those Foster Grants was none other than Boisterous BILL MANTLO himself! He was paying a visit to his local Comic Book Emporium to pick up the latest copy of MICRONAUTS when he nearly got his head shaved by stardrive rockets. We tried to get Shy STEVE DITKO to put in an appearance as well, but he was too busy drawing one of the most exciting jobs of his career.

Dear Bill and Steve,

Well, Sockamagoo, Bill - great story! MICRONAUTS #39 was staggering! The "Funny Business" sequence beautifully employed the idea that Marvel and DC stories actually take place - that the so-called "Marvel Universe" is our universe. I like that!

Mark Arsenault
5 Helen Court
Scolia, NY 12302

Dear Micromaniacs,

A few days ago I was sitting outside the Central Nest eating a Snail-Loaf when I suddenly remembered what day it was: Monday, the day the local retailer gets in his shipment of MICRONAUTS! I hitched up the snails to the cart and quickly drove off, my tunic whipping in the wind.

I picked up MICRONAUTS #39 to see what my second-cousin, Bug, and his friends were up to. I was very happy to see them back on Earth again this issue. The Micronauts should stay on Earth for awhile and explore, fighting nothing more than a few rats or getting stuck in a microwave oven. The thing that makes them different is their size. In the Microverse they are normal; on Earth, they are quite different. Here a washing machine poses a life-and-death threat to them. Go back to the old days of showing the Micros creeping through air shafts.

One final plea: Get rid of Devil and Nanotron, and BRING BACK BIOTRON!

Chuck Gambie
1038 CTH os
Onalaska, WI 54650

There seems to be two opposing camps among the Micromaniacs Assembled, Chuck. Your camp wants the Micros on Earth, where their diminutive size contrasts with that of a larger humanity. The other camp emphatically wants them back in the Microverse, fighting Microverse-sized menaces. We're trying to strike a balance, treading carefully between the two. We think both sides are gonna be satisfied in months to come.

Dear Bill and Steve,

I enjoyed MICRONAUTS #39. The idea of the Micros going into a comic shop that sells their own comic was simply fantastic. It was also nice to see what's happening with Lady Slug and Prince Pharoid. Plus, I wish that Cilicia would get it through her thick skull that what Commander Rann said (page 16) is true. I would also like your remembering a lady (?) whom I almost forgot: Duchess Beladonna.

I am very anxious for next issue, and you can count on me to give you a review of every upcoming issue.

Darin Henry
33 Old Stone House Road
Carlisle, PA 17013

If they're all as nice as this one, Darin, we thank you.

Dear Bill and Steve,

I have enjoyed MICRONAUTS since the first issue; I consider it one of Marvel's finest series. One problem, however, that has bothered me is the inconsistency, or rather, the discrepancy, in proportion between the Micronauts and the HMS Endeavor.

On Earth, the Micronauts appear to be several inches tall. If the Endeavor contains not only a bridge, but living quarters, too, I estimate that it would have to be at least the size of a small automobile to accommodate beings of the Micro's size.

Conversely, the Endeavor is shown fitting through both a sewer opening and a comic book cover. This suggests that the Micros are insect-sized, because only beings that small would be able to occupy the many-chambered ship.

I'm sorry I can't think of a solution to this problem; I'm only writing to ask you to keep it in mind for future issues. A series as good as MICRONAUTS should not be spoiled by the overlooking of a detail so integral to the plot as proportional size.

Keep up the great work.

Robert Kass
University of Pennsylvania
3333 Walnut Street, Room #480
Philadelphia, PA 19104

We couldn't agree with you more, Rob. And we will try to correct these discrepancies in future issues.

Dear Micromakers,

Hello. Another one of your loyal readers here. I've been reading MICRONAUTS since issue one, and I still love it. I like the new direct sales format; it not only saved the mag from extinction (or so I hear) but it also gives me more pages, no ads (!!!!!!), great covers, Steve Ditko, two pages of letters, and other special features.

Thanks.

James McCartney
RR 1, Box 51-C
Greenwood, AR 72936

We kinda like it ourselves, Jimmy.



Dear Bill and Steve,

I was not thrilled at the prospect of buying MICRONAUTS #39. I had felt that MICRONAUTS #38 had been below average quality, and at first glance, the cover of MICRONAUTS #39 seemed so similar to so many others.

But I was surprised. From the very beginning, "Starting Over!" was intriguing. The story was well-written. The art was flawless. My congratulations. This is, indeed, a new direction, and a good one. Here's to starting over!

Wesley M. Allison

Now for the other side of the coin. . .

Dear Micro-Corrupter,

The best thing about MICRONAUTS #39 was Paul Kurucz's letter in this issue's installment of *Micromails*. I agree with everything he said, so I will not reiterate what has already been stated.

The last two issues of MICRONAUTS were, in one word, poor. The only saving grace two months in a row has been the covers by Michael Golden. Bill Mantlo's stories have been good throughout the series, but unfortunately the art in the last six issues has left much to be desired.

When I read your reply to Mr. Kurucz, I disagreed with your statement that other MICRONAUTS fans were generally contented with the direction this mag was taking. I, and many others who have been MICRONAUTS fans since the beginning, feel that, artwise, the mag is being mishandled. Golden's and Broderick's art gave the perfect feel as to how MICRONAUTS should be approached. Your decision to have Gil Kane take over the art is wrong. I urge you to return Golden and Broderick even if you have to make the book bi-monthly (this is not my first choice, but better bi-monthly than mediocre). This was once an outstanding series. I hope it will be again.

Wyatt A. Mason
146 Central Park West
NYC, NY 10023

You know, Paul, at the time Michael Golden left MICRONAUTS (#12) there were moans and wails of despair! Nobody, the fans said, could take his place. By the time Pat Broderick left the mag there were plaints that only *he* could draw this book. The fact of the matter is, we had no choice where these artists were concerned. They chose to leave the MICRONAUTS and move on to other endeavors.

And so it goes. Now Gil Kane succeeds Michael Golden and Pat Broderick at the artistic helm of MICRONAUTS. We suspect that, like each of his predecessors, Gil, too, will in time be hailed as the "definitive" artist for MICRONAUTS.

In the meantime, Wyatt, rest assured that you are not alone in your criticism. What we find so wonderful is that criticism of MICRONAUTS, as shown by the letter below, is done from a feeling of wanting to make this mag better, not see it go down the tubes. That is what makes MICRONAUTS special!

Dear Interspace Cadets,

Sorry, troops, but I must agree with Paul Kurucz's letter in MICRONAUTS #39: The past eight or so issues have not been up to the quality of the Golden/Broderick periods. But, fear not — you appear to be improving. With the full-length debut of Gil Kane next ish, I'm sure this mag will resume its climb to the top.

One of the things that is putting the Micros back on the ladder of success is Michael Golden's covers. I've never seen a bad Golden Cover on any comic, and I expect I never will. The man is clearly a perfectionist.

Negative time, however: "Starting over!" should be started over. . . and done right, this time. It was almost a complete waste. The only enjoyable part was in the beginning, where we were treated to the sight of the Micros running amok in a comic book shop. The rest of the issue seemed as rushed and uninspired as the last seven or eight efforts (with the sole exception of last issue's excellent "Forge of Friendship!" tale by Gil Kane). The story even contained a sort of sour irony, what with the comics shop dealer saying that MICRONAUTS was going to become more "sophisticated" while the story itself was almost abominably childish and simple-minded. We weren't even allowed to enjoy Steve Ditko's usually

splendid art because of Danny Bulanadi's rather heavy-handed inks.

That's enough criticism: it's no fun criticizing a comic one loves. But I feel that it's my duty to help you realize your mistakes so that you won't make them again. With this new format, MICRONAUTS will go where no comic mag has ever gone before. . . and I'll be along for the trip!

Stu Krull
28 Kettle Creek Road
Freehold, NJ 07728

Thanks, Stu, you won't be disappointed.

